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THE NATIONAL INTEREST

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Has Democracy Failed Russia?

Peter Rutland

THE SUDDEN COLLAPSE of the Soviet Union was immediately taken as vindication of Western values and proof of the superiority of both market economics and a democratic system of government. America had won the Cold War, and "market democracy" (to use President Clinton's concise term) would spread from Belgrade to Bishkek. No one stopped to question the teleological assumption that events in Russia could be understood in terms of a transition from point "A" (a state-socialist political system with a command economy) to point "B" (a democratic polity with a market economy).

Few were inclined to ponder the special problems that the concepts "democracy" and "market" might encounter in the post-socialist landscape. On the contrary, building democracy and a market economy were assumed to be compatible and complementary processes which could be introduced to any country on the planet. This left Yeltsin playing the double role of George Washington and Adam Smith—either of which on its own would have strained even his considerable thespian skills to the limit.

This article challenges the Panglossian complacency of the "market democracy" paradigm, on three fronts. First, it will question the model of democracy which is being propagated by Russia's Western advisers and well-wishers. Second, it will consider democratization in the context of unresolved problems of state- and nation-building in Russia, challenges which most other countries in political transition do not have to face. Third, it will probe the linkages between flawed democratization and market reform.

The key point to bear in mind is that Russia is still on the downward path of disintegration rather than the upward march of transition. The abrupt collapse of the Soviet state unleashed turbulent centripetal processes which are still coursing through the political, economic, and social fabric of Russia. Yeltsin and the democratic movement managed to mobilize sufficient political force to destroy the old system, but have not been able to agree among themselves on the shape of the new order.

The democratic opening of 1988-90 created two new political actors: a broad but shallow democratic movement, geared to election campaigns and mass protests; and a ramshackle parliament with minimal legislative power, which was temporarily graced with legitimacy as the symbol of democracy. Alongside these two new players were the serried ranks of the old elite: the military, the bureaucrats, the managers, the secret police, the ex-communists. This transitory political regime has been dominated by *presidentialism* and *regionalism*. Presidentialism refers to the pivotal role played by Boris Yeltsin in mediat-

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ing between the old and new political groups. It may be something of a misnomer, since the authority wielded by Yeltsin adheres more to his person than to the office he holds, and for the most part it is neither defined by law nor checked by institutional structures. Regionalism surfaced because the loss of control of the old bureaucracies led to a shift from functional to territorial representation of political interests. This is good for democracy in the long run, but makes the national leadership's task much more difficult in the short term.

The Working Model Applied

Most discussions of the spread of democracy to Russia share similar assumptions about the elements which constitute a democratic political system. The checklist includes:

1) free and fair elections;
2) separation of powers;
3) a fair and independent judicial system;
4) a free and inquisitive press;
5) the widespread sharing of democratic values in society at large;
6) respect for human rights: at least individual rights, and possibly collective rights (e.g., for ethnic minorities); and
7) the presence of civil society, i.e., a plurality of social organizations.

Each of the elements in the liberal democratic canon has been introduced in Russia, but in a curiously distorted form. To paraphrase Trotsky, it is democracy reflected in a samovar. Its faltering steps down the road to democracy have been accompanied by economic disintegration, rampant crime, the collapse of public morals, rising death rates, loss of international influence, and the continuation in power of much of the old communist-era elite. Rather than question the applicability and appropriateness of their own model of democracy, Western liberals typically blame these problems on Russia's political culture or the personal qualities of its leaders. We are told that Russia has failed democracy, and not that democracy has failed Russia.

In fact, the checklist approach is extraordinarily naive in reducing democracy to a set of values and institutions. What is absent is any consideration of *politics*: the struggle for resources and clash of ideas between different social and political groups. The assumption is that once democratic values and institutions are in place, parties will emerge to compete for the popular vote, and sound policies and good government will follow. Democracy is seen as a source of political legitimation rather than a forum for policy resolution. After all, the market democracy paradigm assumes that the new Russian government had no choice but to introduce market liberalization. When one thinks about it, it is a curious sort of democracy which begins by telling people that they have no alternatives.

Let us look at the seven items on the West's democratic list and consider how they relate to Russian realities.

1) Free and Fair Elections

Partially-free elections were held in the USSR in 1989 and 1990, and in June 1991 Boris Yeltsin was elected President of the Russian Republic. Gorbachev refused to submit himself for popular election, and Yeltsin came to be seen as the legitimate voice of the Russian people. This experience showed how dangerous it can be for authoritarian regimes to toy with elections, no matter how unfair the electoral process or how pusillanimous the powers of the legislature. Gorbachev's experiment set in train a dynamic of democratization which swiftly undermined the authority of the Communist party.

So far, so good for the liberal democratic model. However, after the failed coup of August 1991 Yeltsin proved strangely reluctant to pursue the electoral path. In Eastern Europe, free elections were held within months of the cracking of the socialist regime. Yeltsin found he could not agree with his democratic allies on the key issues of the

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day—market reform and the creation of a post-Soviet federation. Thus he chose to go it alone, and delayed calling new elections until December 1993. If elections had taken place in late 1991 the democrats would probably have won handsomely. After the price liberalization of January 1992, however, the economic collapse accelerated, and in the eyes of the public the democrats had to share some of the blame for that.

The crucial problem is that even by the end of 1994 no credible political parties worthy of the name have emerged in Russia. Political parties come from one of two sources: they either grow upwards from social movements or downwards from parliamentary factions. During the elections of 1989 and 1990 a loose coalition of voters' clubs emerged, which came together as the Democratic Russia movement. They showed they could win elections and bring thousands of followers into the streets. The sole issue on which they agreed, however, was the need to dislodge the Communist Party from power. Given the postponement of elections, there was no opportunity for the fledgling parties to develop through campaigning. Instead, their leaders had to engineer crises and confrontations around which to mobilize their followers, which added to the polarized climate in Russian politics.

The top-down route of party formation was also weak. The Interregional Deputies Group, which democratic deputies formed in the USSR Supreme Soviet in 1989, never coalesced into a coherent political party. It was riven by personal jealousies and divided over the national question (i.e., the viability of the USSR). All decision-making power rested in the presidential apparatus, which left nothing of substance to bargain over in parliament and provided no incentive to forge lasting political coalitions. Instead, there was an endless succession of small parties—"taxicab parties"—which were used as launching pads for politicians seeking entry into government. Communists and nationalists aside, it was hard to differentiate between the various parties on the policy spectrum.

The key distinguishing characteristic of politicians was whether or not they were part of Boris Yeltsin's patronage network ("Ours or theirs?"). The political map of Russia did not consist of a left-right policy spectrum, but a series of concentric circles of diminishing access, radiating outwards from the Kremlin. To the annoyance of the democrats, Yeltsin refused to take over the leadership of Democratic Russia, arguing that the president should be "above politics." He instead chose to forge a new ruling elite out of old and new politicians by doling out individual jobs and favors.

When fresh elections were finally held in December 1993, in the wake of Yeltsin's crushing of the old parliament, there was a frantic scramble among the democrats to come up with viable parties. The campaign turned into an American-style media blitz, with the three leading democratic parties spending $85 million on their media campaign, and Vladimir Zhirinovsky's Liberal Democrats $14 million. The U.S. National Democratic Institute issued a handbook on the art of campaigning, with detailed instructions on handling the press and the role of the *sked'yuler* in managing the candidate's time.[1]

It was hard to tell the parties apart on policy grounds. Everybody was in favor of stopping inflation, ending subsidies to the other republics, and so on. Dissatisfaction with Yeltsin's use of force against the parliament and the ongoing economic crisis meant that the four democratic parties only polled 35 percent of the vote. The Communists and their Agrarian allies won 20 percent from their traditional constituencies. The Liberal Democrats topped the party list with 23 percent, thanks to the nationalist rhetoric of their charismatic leader.

Thus Russia's first free election produced a propaganda victory for an eccentric neo-fascist whose campaign pledges includ-

[1]U.S. National Democratic Institute, *Kak pobedit' na vyborakh*, Moscow, 1993.

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ed irradiating Lithuania and seizing Alaska. The Democrats had little choice but to cooperate with the Communists and Agrarians in order to keep Zhirinovsky well away from power. Because of Yeltsin's reluctance, the election had come two years too late. By the end of 1993 the voters had lost their faith in all politicians. Ironically, while free elections had been vital in destroying the old communist system, they came to be seen as an awkward obstacle in the path of building the new market democracy.

2) Separation of Powers

Yeltsin's second crucial political error after August 1991 was procrastination in drawing up a new constitution. His advisers urged him to model the Russian political system around a U.S.-style presidency, with a Constitutional Court policing the separation of powers between president and legislature. There were several problems with this approach:

First, Yeltsin was in no rush to create a strong legislature which could rival his power. Despite the fact that it was the Russian Congress that had propelled him into power, Yeltsin felt himself to be an independent political actor after his election in June 1991 and his pivotal role in facing down the August coup.

Second, while the idea of a strong executive had plenty of parallels in Russia's past, the other elements of the American model—an independent constitutional court and a powerful legislature—were totally absent from Russian history.

Third, there are grounds for arguing that the U.S.-style separation of powers is less universally applicable than is often assumed. (The Founding Fathers themselves were all too aware of the uniqueness of the model they were devising.) The U.S. system assumes civilian control over the military and a reasonably wide dispersion of economic power in society—neither of which pertain in Russia or in countries like Brazil. Presidentialism in Latin America has typically resulted in deadlock with a hostile congress.[2] One can argue that Russian democracy would have been better served by a parliamentary system, in which the executive and legislative branches of government are joined rather than separated.

After the coup of August 1991, Yeltsin persuaded Congress to grant him emergency power to rule by decree for one year. He then appointed a team of young technocrats, led by Deputy Prime Minister Egor Gaidar, to implement radical economic reform along Polish lines. The stage was thus set for two years of increasingly tense political confrontation between a truculent Congress and a president determined to pursue his own political and economic agenda. The rivalry between Yeltsin and Congress was not driven by alternate conceptions of Russia's future, or even by the interests of different social groups. It was not a dispute over policy, but simply a struggle for power. Yeltsin tried to rule the country directly, with scant regard for the opinions of Congress.

The presidential apparatus grew to more than twenty thousand officials, and took over the former Central Committee building in addition to the Kremlin. This hastily assembled bureaucratic leviathan operated in a very inefficient manner. Yeltsin's own chief of staff, Yuri Petrov, admitted that he was unable to keep track of the thousands of decrees the president was signing.

There followed two years of political trench warfare between Yeltsin and Congress. Yeltsin used television addresses and calls for referenda to appeal directly to the people. He continued to play the anti-communist card—accusing the parliamentarians of seeking the restoration of Soviet socialism. He lured parliamentary deputies into jobs in his administration. Each side accused the other of corruption on a lavish scale. Yeltsin's half-hearted efforts to forge a coalition with centrist forces fell apart at the Seventh Congress in December 1992. He challenged Congress by

[2]A. Valenzuela, "The Crisis of Presidentialism," *Journal of Democracy*, October 4, 1993, pp. 3-16.

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holding a referendum on presidential power in April 1993. While voters expressed their confidence in Yeltsin's rule and in his economic policies, the questions calling for new elections for President and Congress in 1993 failed to win the required majority. When Yeltsin summoned a Constitutional Assembly to discuss his draft constitution in June, Congress blocked its approval.

Yeltsin decided to lance the boil by disbanding the parliament on September 21 and calling for fresh elections. Neither of these actions was within his legal powers. Parliamentary deputies occupied the White House, and were ousted by troops on October 4. The striking television images of tanks shelling the White House would cost Yeltsin dearly in the December election.

In the wake of the October events, Yeltsin disbanded all the regional councils, suspended the Constitutional Court (whose members he himself had selected), and banned eight political parties and their newspapers (although these bans were subsequently lifted). Yeltsin also dropped his pledge to hold early presidential elections (not due until 1996).

The hastily-written draft constitution was weighed heavily in favor of presidential rule. For example, the president nominates the prime minister, and can dismiss parliament after three refusals of his candidate. The constitution was approved in a referendum on the same day as the congressional elections. Despite initial reports that 51 percent of voters endorsed the constitution, it was later revealed that the actual figure was 46 percent. Technically, this meant that the constitution was invalid, but in Russia people had long since stopped paying attention to technicalities.

3) An Independent Judicial System

The non-emergence of an independent judiciary has been one of the weakest spots in Russia's attempted transition to democracy. The old system of political controls collapsed with the banning of the Communist Party after the August coup. But politicians, Yeltsin included, continue to ignore or manipulate the judicial system as they see fit. This has been evident in his reliance on rule by decree, his reluctance to recognize the authority of the Constitutional Court, and his centralization of control over the judiciary.

Liberals hope that marketization will promote the rule of law, by creating a new class of property owners with a strong incentive to have their rights respected. In Russia's free-for-all economy, however, businessmen turn to private enforcement regimes (i.e., the mafia) and not the courts to ensure contract compliance.

4) A Free Press

Russia's democratization began with glasnost, and over the past decade the country has acquired a combative and broadly independent press staffed by a core of dedicated journalists. A broad spectrum of opinion is available, from the far right and far left to a clutch of pro-government newspapers. But it is still premature to talk of a completely free press. Financial constraints have caused a catastrophic decline in circulation, and only the tabloids have been able to remain profitable. The others all depend on business sponsorship and/or government assistance (through the allocation of subsidized newsprint).

President Yeltsin and his advisor Gennady Burbulis have proved all too willing to use their financial and political leverage over the press to serve their own partisan agenda—an issue which dominated Yeltsin's clashes with Congress. The television networks are particularly subservient to Yeltsin, and in some respects are less objective than they were back in 1991. In the provinces, liberal national newspapers are often hard to obtain, and most of the local press remains under the control of provincial political bosses.

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5) Popular Support for Democratic Values

The presence or absence of a civic culture in Russia has been a topic of controversy among Western political scientists. Most of the research money allocated by bodies such as the National Science Foundation has gone into opinion surveys, whose findings appear to show that democratic norms such as free speech are widely respected in Russian society.[3] Many Sovietologists have challenged these findings. In most cases the questions were taken straight from U.S. surveys, where the political context is quite different. It is well known that respondents tend to give what they suppose to be the "right" answer, and this is even more likely to apply in Russia, where citizens are unused to opinion polls. The surveys typically test attitudes in the abstract, without exploring the trade-offs between different values. The surveys have also shown a preference for strong political leadership. The results of the December 1993 elections did little to bolster the case of those who argue that democratic values have taken root in Russia.

6) Respect for Human Rights

Human rights at least have seen dramatic progress. Just about all the political prisoners inherited from the communist era have been released, although some people remain in prison for "economic crimes" which would not feature on Western statute books. Freedom to travel and emigrate is enjoyed by all. Although the lack of due process is worrying, measured in terms of human rights Russia has moved decisively towards democracy.

Ironically, the use of human rights as a political tool has switched sides. It is now the Russian government which is invoking the Helsinki Accords, to protest the denial of citizenship and language rights to Russians living in Estonia, Latvia and elsewhere. And Western governments are worried not about the denial of the right to emigrate, but about the prospect of a flood of impoverished migrants heading West.

7) The Growth of Civil Society

De Tocqueville argued that the strength of democracy in the United States lay in the dense network of social organizations characteristic of American society. Reflecting this belief, U.S. aid for democratization in Russia has focused on the promotion of associative behavior, from independent trade unions to environmental action groups, in the belief that this is the best long-run foundation for democracy.

In the 1980s some academics began to argue that elements of a civil society were sprouting up under the surface of Brezhnevite stagnation. This Tocquevillian vision seemed to be coming true during the Gorbachev era, when there was an explosion of informal groups, ranging from Buddhists to bodybuilders, anti-semites to amateur theatricals. The informals played an important role, chiseling away at the mortar holding together the communist monolith.

Once glasnost gave way to democratization, however, these groups proved unable to make the transition from the social to the political sphere. In the Baltic republics and Armenia they helped generate mass political movements, but no such pattern appeared in Russia. As political and economic disintegration accelerated, the informals were left behind. Many of their leaders were elected to legislatures, and there was no longer a Communist Party to protest against, nor ministries to lobby. In the Russia of 1994 it is still hard to find voluntary associations which could be cited as incubators of democratic values and experience. The hypothesis that a nascent civil society was maturing within Soviet society has not been vindicated by events.

Indeed, there seems to have been a conceptual error at the heart of the civil society approach. While Marx followed Hegel in por-

[3]J.L.Gibson and R.M. Duch, "Democratic Values and the Transformation of the Soviet Union," *Journal of Politics*, 54 (May 1992), pp. 329-71.

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traying civil society as arising in opposition to the state, Adam Smith saw it as superior to and inclusive of the state. For Smith the essence of civil society was private property and the rule of law, both of which served to limit the state. If one accepts the Scottish Enlightenment approach, it is premature to talk of civil society in Russia, since private property and the rule of law are still essentially absent.

The Antinomies of Russian Nationalism

IN RUSSIA, THE democratic transition involves the break-up of a multinational empire. This raises profound questions about the existential nature of the state which most other nascent democracies have not had to face (though the cases of South Africa, India, Czechoslovakia and Yugoslavia are in some ways comparable). Democracy presupposes agreement on the boundaries of the *demos* (the people) that is to rule. Liberal political theory has little to say on the subject of where nation-states come from and the principles upon which they should be constituted. The Western experience with nation-building is a long and painful one, extending over several centuries and invariably involving warfare. In Russia there is still no agreement on the shape of the political community which will enjoy self-determination. Russia must choose not merely what sort of political system it desires, but also *what* Russia is as a cultural entity, and *where* it is in terms of physical borders. Young American democracy faced similar challenges—and came up with some answers (such as Manifest Destiny) which the international community would obviously not accept in Russia today.

Russia had never been constituted as a nation-state in the conventional sense. Less than half the population of the Russian Empire were ethnic Russians, and 350 years of expansion across contiguous territory made it difficult for Russians to perceive where Russia ended and foreign land began. Although ethnic Russians dominated the Soviet state, many aspects of Russian culture were suppressed and Russians had to rule in the name of multinational socialism.

Nationalism emerged as the crucial factor in the demise of the USSR. Gorbachev's political reforms opened up a Pandora's box of ethnic claims, suppressed for decades, which Gorbachev himself was unable to resolve. One can however argue that it was Russian nationalism, rather than the nationalism of the non-Russian peoples, which was ultimately responsible for the destruction of the USSR. Gorbachev's commitment to the Soviet state created an opening for Yeltsin's political comeback (after his dismissal from the Politburo in 1987). Yeltsin was able to turn the institutions of the Russian Federation into a power-base to rival that of Gorbachev in the federal Communist Party and government. In August 1991, the core institutions of the Soviet state—the army and the KGB—switched their loyalty to Yeltsin's Russia.

Having freed itself from the Soviet Union, however, Russia's problems in defining itself as a nation-state are far from resolved, and its cohesion is threatened from within and without.

The internal challenge stems from the fact that 19 percent of Russia's population are non-Russians, most of them living in twenty-one autonomous republics within the border of the federation. Secession is not an option for these republics, since most are surrounded by Russian territory, and in many cases the titular nationality is outnumbered by Russian inhabitants. (The exception is Chechenya in the north Caucasus, which has achieved de facto independence.)

The external challenge to Russia's identity and cohesion involves Russia's relations with the newly independent states. Twenty-five million Russians live outside the Russian Federation, and Moscow feels obliged to look out for their interests. The economies of the ex-Soviet republics remain heavily dependent on Russia—and many Russian factories are still tied to their old customers in the "near abroad." They form a powerful lobby within Russia and argue for maintaining the subsi-

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dized trade with the CIS.

The security dimension also remains unresolved. What military policy should a democratic Russia adopt towards its neighbors? Should it stand by while Tajikistan is torn apart by civil war? Should it intervene to try to stop the six-year long conflict between Armenia and Azerbaijan? Should Russia do nothing if Ukraine uses force to prevent the secession of Crimea (75 percent Russian, and a part of the Russian Federation until 1954)? Democratization does not provide an answer to any of these questions—yet these are the very questions at the forefront of Russian politics, around which battle lines are being drawn.

The European empires, which had the benefit of an ocean between their homeland and their colonies, all suffered political identity crises of various severity after the end of empire. The Russian post-imperial dilemma is far more wrenching and will overshadow the democratization process for years to come.

Moscow and the Regions

EVEN TAKING THE national boundaries of Russia as given, the crucial issue in Russian domestic politics is state-building rather than democratization. Russia remains an unwieldy giant of a country, spread over seven thousand miles with atrocious means of communication between its component parts. The collapse of the Soviet state apparatus severely weakened Moscow's ability to manage the country, and it is a misnomer to describe the resulting decentralized, unstable political system as "democratized." Rather, it reminds one of the periods of confusion—such as the "Time of Troubles" (1598-1613)—which have interrupted Russian history.

As a student of Russian history, Yeltsin is no doubt well aware of the dangers of anarchy. But in 1990-91 he had to make concessions to provincial elites in order to overcome his political opponents in Moscow. In October 1991 he persuaded Congress to suspend regional elections for one year, during which he would directly appoint regional governors. He also set up a network of presidential envoys in the provinces (for which he had no legal authority).

Within each of Russia's twenty-one ethnic republics and sixty-seven regions, new and old political elites battled for power as the old order collapsed. At the same time, these regional elites maneuvered for allies in Moscow. Some came under Yeltsin's patronage, others lined up with Congress. Thus in Nizhni Novgorod, for example, the old and new elites were initially able to forge a compromise, and established good relations with Yeltsin's apparatus. In the tradition of the Potemkin village, "Nizhni" became the model city for the transition to capitalism, and the favorite destination for the army of Western consultants who descended on Russia. The compromise in Nizhni Novgorod subsequently broke down.

The ethnic republics were exempted from Yeltsin's direct rule and were allowed to select their own leaders. Following the lead of Tatarstan and Chechenya, they forced Yeltsin to sign a new Federation Treaty in March 1992, which seemed to recognize their sovereign authority over everything except military affairs. Yeltsin poured subsidies into the republics in 1992 to wean them away from supporting Khasbulatov and Congress. The balance shifted in 1993, as Yeltsin tried to rein in the regions. Provincial leaders blocked his efforts to establish presidential rule, and some regions began electing their own administrators. In several cases these elected leaders were thrown out of office by the police, with Yeltsin's connivance. The original draft constitution of July 1993 recognized the sovereignty of the ethnic republics, and granted each republic and region two seats in the upper chamber of parliament. After the October events, however, Yeltsin dismissed all the regional councils, and the final version of the constitution revoked many of the republics' special rights.

The Russian Federation is not about to go

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the way of the Soviet Union, and break up into independent states. Russians share a strong sense of cultural homogeneity, and have four centuries' experience of life in a common state. Central and northern Russia are totally dependent upon European Russia for access to the outside world, while the Russian Far East needs Moscow's support to safeguard against its potential vulnerability to China and Japan. But in the short term the political struggles between the center and the regions have derailed the process of democratization. Yeltsin's success in establishing his grip in Moscow rests in no small measure on his manipulation of these disintegrative tendencies.

Democracy and Economic Development

THE ECONOMICS OF transition is typically discussed in terms of a trade-off between social justice and economic growth, or even between democracy and economic development. Russia has not yet faced the luxury of such a trade-off. Social inequality has been increasing and economic output has plummeted, while the struggle to build a viable democracy is still far from over.

Talk about building a market economy is premature, since Russia is still experiencing the death throes of central planning. The command economy was not built in a day and it cannot be got rid of overnight. The 40 percent decline in industrial output is a consequence of the collapse of the old system, not of the decisions taken by politicians since 1991. The "shock" did not come from the government's decision to liberalize prices—in 1991 inflation was already out of control. Rather, it came from lifting the stone on seventy years of gross misallocation of resources and violation of the laws of market economics.

The January 1992 price liberalization simply delivered the *coup de grâce* to an economic system that was already in its final agony. That said, Gaidar can be properly criticized for being too optimistic in believing that freeing prices and foreign trade would sweep away the inherited inefficiencies of the past. Price liberalization without the presence of competing producers was a recipe for sustained inflation. Liberalizing foreign trade led to a fire sale of natural resources, with much of the earnings staying outside the country. Since 1992 capital flight from Russia has been $12-15 billion a year—while the government reneges on its debt repayments and pleads for Western loans.

In its enthusiasm to apply shock therapy, the Gaidar team overlooked the state's inability to provide the minimum public goods necessary for the functioning of a market economy (freedom from crime, a stable currency, the rule of law). In a travesty of Hayekian logic, it was assumed that such market institutions would be self-generating. Rebuilding an effective Russian state would require political compromise with key political elites inherited from the Soviet past—the parliament, the industrial managers, and so on. The Gaidar team eschewed such efforts, preferring a "technocratic fix:" the swift implementation of economic reforms before an opposition coalition could be assembled. Economic reform came to be seen as a substitute for political reform. In the event, however, Congress forced Yeltsin to delay key elements of the program, and the shock therapy—dubious in the best of circumstances—was stillborn.

The reformers hoped that Yeltsin's political prestige would carry through the economic reforms. In practice, the polarity was reversed, and Yeltsin's political authority came to hinge on his controversial economic program. There was a mass distribution of privatization vouchers in July 1992, in the hope that this would build popular support for economic reform—as in the Czech Republic. The Supreme Soviet was persuaded to adopt the privatization law by including a provision allowing workers and managers to buy 51 percent of the shares. Privatization thus became a vehicle for the consolidation of managerial control over the old state enterprises, even as it was trumpeted by the government to be the most successful element in the reform program.

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The traditional industrialists still control most of the country's resources out in the provinces, although they have not been able to articulate a collective interest at the national level. While the old lobbies have lost much of their political base, the new businessmen have failed to create one. Russia's new capitalism revolves around short-term, rent-seeking behavior. There is no money to be made in manufacturing, whereas rich profits can be had speculating in foreign currency, exporting raw materials and importing consumer durables. The old and new elites compete for access to the political decision-makers who can allocate export quotas or bank credits.

It is hard to see how this raw, predatory capitalism can be justified to a democratic electorate. On the other hand, this is just what many Russians, raised on Upton Sinclair, expected a market economy to look like. Given the lack of real democratization there is little chance of this popular discontent being translated into an effective political movement. For most long-suffering Russians the "market" is a political abstraction, a symbol of change which must be accepted as inevitable.

In their haste to embrace capitalism, the reformers did not dwell on the fact that there is no standard Western model. The emphasis on trade liberalization is particularly puzzling. Most capitalist countries saw their economies grow behind protective barriers for decades, and only introduced convertible currencies in the 1970s. China has enjoyed spectacular economic growth without implementing almost any of the prescriptions of the Russian reform program. Chinese exports have boomed—but exchange controls are still in place, and barriers keep out foreign imports. The existence of a range of options within the capitalist path did not deter the Russian reformers from presenting their program as the only alternative that could save Russia. This accords well with the ideological mindset inherited from the past, in which politics is reduced to a choice between right and wrong, between obedience and dissent.

* * *

Unlike most of Eastern Europe, Russia has not experienced a more or less clean break with the old system. Instead of a wholesale turnover of the political elite, there has been a protracted battle between the executive and legislative branches of government, each claiming to be the true guardian of democracy. Unlike the other countries in transition, Russia is a former empire that has still not defined its relations with its neighbors and its character as a federal state. Very few countries with a living standard of less than $5,000 per capita a year have been able to operate as democracies. Russia is less than half way to this target, and has few of the cultural traditions (such as a history of British colonialism) which have enabled countries like India and Botswana to buck the trend. Thus the prognosis for the future of democracy in Russia must be rather grim.

None of this is to suggest that Russia would be better off with some sort of authoritarian regime. For all its flaws, the haphazard democratization of Russia was the only way to rid the country of the Soviet system and set it on course towards a more civilized society. But the adoption of the American separation of powers model has exacerbated political feuding at national level and encouraged the fragmentation of central authority. Russia has not been and will not be served by hasty efforts to transplant models of democracy and the market economy, as if local circumstances and conditions count for nothing. Still less does it need the "propaganda of success" which has often accompanied the exercise, usually at American taxpayers' expense. □

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The Russian Aid Mess

Charles Flickner

THE WELL-INTENTIONED effort to use United States tax dollars to influence significantly the course of events in Russia and Ukraine died a quiet death over the past few months. Born in 1991 as a $400 million bipartisan congressional initiative to reduce the threat from excess Soviet weapons of mass destruction, by 1993 aid to Russia and Ukraine had become a $3 billion hobby shop. When Presidents Clinton and Yeltsin met in September 1994, with few concrete results to show for the time and money invested in aid, the two frustrated leaders quietly agreed to focus on trade and investment. The Russians, badly cast as supplicants, were relieved.

This is not to say that the winding up of grant aid programs will end claims by the former Soviet Union on the United States Treasury. The disturbing Russian and Ukrainian habit of ignoring bills due could result in future claims against federal export credit and investment agencies that far exceed the $4 billion already disbursed in grant aid between 1991 and 1994. This year alone, $900 million in agricultural loans have been rescheduled. Moreover, massive disbursements from the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank could lead to future losses by their largest shareholder, the United States. No doubt pundits will seek again to attribute setbacks in Moscow to a lack of support from Washington. It may therefore be useful to provide a brief draft history, before it is revised, of recent American aid to Russia and Ukraine.

In particular, during the hectic transition following the November 1994 mid-term elections, it may be useful to recall that Senators Bob Dole and Jesse Helms joined Sam Nunn and Richard Lugar in backing the original 1991 legislation to fund cooperative efforts with what was still the Soviet Union. The goal of the Nunn-Lugar law was to dismantle Soviet nuclear weapons and safeguard nuclear know-how, and especially to prevent Soviet nuclear scientists from seeking employment in rogue states. A month before the 1992 presidential election, another bipartisan coalition secured passage of the Freedom Support Act, authorizing $425 million in assistance to the former Soviet Union. The bill also created a precedent by largely exempting such aid from the restrictions applied to other aid programs. With all three major presidential candidates publicly backing them, these measures reflected wide support for helping the Russians. This broad-based, bilateral support continued, and even grew, after the election.

The desire to aid the Russians has overcome normal differences in Congress. In the Senate, for example, deficit-hawk Pete Domenici and long-time opponent of foreign

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aid Robert Byrd joined together in September 1993 to bend rigid budget rules, in order to enable President Clinton to meet his rash commitments to find more than $2.5 billion for Russia and Ukraine. And in the House, even as late as the spring of 1994, Minority Leader Newt Gingrich and Majority Leader Dick Gephardt agreed in a confidential report on their joint delegation to Russia that, despite problems, the aid effort should continue.

Following the Vancouver and Tokyo summit meetings in the spring of 1993, the aid effort reached its peak: $1.7 billion in civilian aid and $1.3 billion in defense funds were appropriated later that year. Though the amounts of aid have since fallen, they remain substantial. In the current fiscal year, President Clinton's overall request of $1.3 billion was finally funded at $1.25 billion. Increases up to $1.6 billion have been considered within the administration for next year, but the final appropriation may not reach half that amount. And much of what is eventually appropriated will be directed toward support for private American trade and investment in Russia and Ukraine.

Original Intent, Original Sins

WHAT WAS THE intent of those undertaking this short-lived effort? Although advocates of helping Russia and Ukraine have consistently maintained that external assistance could merely supplement internal changes, they also believed that supporting aid might secure them a small but favorable place in history. Most public officials could empathize with the new leaders of Russia and Ukraine as they faced the daunting task of encouraging democracy and implementing effective reform, and most preferred to risk wasting several billion dollars rather than see them fail and have that failure attributed to lack of American support. In retrospect, it is apparent that few Washington officials had a clear or deep understanding of the situation in Russia and Ukraine, and many were influenced by academic experts who promoted simplistic solutions with the enthusiasm of door-to-door salesmen.

There were reasons for Americans of all political persuasions to be supportive. Conservatives had already established personal contacts with Russian leaders during the last years of the Soviet Union. Dole, for example, met Boris Yeltsin at the airport on his first visit to Washington, at a time when Yeltsin was being demonized by the Bush administration. The Heritage Foundation provided a hospitable refuge for Russian officials while the executive branch clung to the Soviet illusion. Moderates such as Librarian of Congress James Billington and Senator Bill Bradley saw the key to successful transformation to be vastly expanded exchange programs that would expose young Russians and Ukrainians to the American way. At times there would be more visitors than qualified hosts. Many liberals believed that beyond transforming Russia, investments in the former Soviet Union would be more than offset by defense cuts. Indeed the success of those investments would justify even greater reductions in Pentagon spending. Some estimated a peace dividend of $230 billion, and urged that the savings go toward domestic programs. This effort faltered in the face of federal budget deficits and a more realistic appraisal of defense reductions, as well as costly new missions assigned the Pentagon.

Between the hopes of Washington and the reality of Russia and Ukraine lay a huge gulf. From the perspective of Moscow and Kiev, the main local beneficiaries of American aid were luxury hotels billing an endless stream of visiting delegations at the rate of $300 per night. By deliberate intent, Russia and Ukraine didn't see a single dollar—the money went to foreign consultants and contractors. From ordinary citizens of Russia and Ukraine, questions about aid from the

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United States most often elicited the resigned shrug of those used to unmet promises. Some former Soviet officials in the defense and energy sectors came to view the effort as a conspiracy to undermine them, and to cause their defense and nuclear industries to degenerate. Technocrat managers in both countries asked why so many of their American counterparts appeared to lack the stature and competence to bring efforts to closure.

Nonetheless, the aid effort has contributed to some real progress. The central focus of the civilian program has been support for market reform in Russia. According to data compiled by the Agency for International Development, American-assisted privatization in Russia has put about eighty thousand small enterprises and fourteen thousand medium and large industrial enterprises in private hands. Over 40 percent of the industrial labor force now works in the private sector. On the other hand, while assertions that many of these privatized companies are controlled by criminal elements cannot be verified, many Russians believe that private managers are stripping company assets and removing corporate capital to foreign bank accounts, rather than paying salaries.

Perhaps because reform in Ukraine didn't begin in earnest until late 1994, Americans have been slow to react to the situation in that country. During his November 1994 state visit to Washington, Ukraine President Leonid Kuchma obtained from President Clinton a precedent-making balance of payments grant of $72 million to help guarantee supplies of natural gas from Russia as he undertakes a drastic reform effort. Together with the January 1994 Trilateral Agreement, under which Russia will provide nuclear fuel rods to civilian reactors in Ukraine, there is at last some evidence that the United States is turning its attention to the particular problems of Ukraine.

The record of defense-related aid is dismal. The Nunn-Lugar program has departed from its original objectives: Not a single nuclear warhead nor a single chemical weapon has been dismantled in Russia under the American aid program. Little if any increase in control over weapons-grade fissile material has resulted from American aid. There is reluctance in Russia to move on these matters until the United States is ready to follow suit.

Some secondary objectives are being met. Delivery systems for weapons of mass destruction, such as strategic missiles and bombers, are beginning to be scrapped with funds from the Nunn-Lugar program. Nearly fifteen hundred nuclear warheads from Soviet missiles remaining in Ukraine, Kazakhstan, and Belarus have been deactivated, and American aid has been instrumental in moving these countries towards compliance with the Non-Proliferation Treaty. But the resulting concentration of nuclear warheads and fissile material in Russia has been ignored, and the joint effort to phase out plutonium production in reactors capable of making weapons-grade material faces an uncertain future.

Finally, and as a result of both Russian and American delays, the original plans to secure Soviet nuclear weapons expertise and to prevent it from going to dangerous locations matured slowly, and may in any case have been misdirected. Since 1991, it has become evident that covert exports of weapons-grade fissile material may prove a greater proliferation danger than nuclear scientists emigrating to rogue states. Indeed, several hundred Russian scientists and engineers formerly associated with nuclear and chemical weapons are now working on peaceful, civilian projects under bilateral and multilateral programs, thanks to $60 million of American taxpayers' money. Efforts to commercialize civilian technologies developed by nuclear weapons institutes in Ukraine and Russia are hampered by lack of funding and agency sponsorship in Washington.

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Bureaucracy is Destiny

WHY HAVE Washington's lofty goals yielded such mixed results in Russia? Despite a genuine desire to streamline and reform the aid process, the bureaucracy continued to assert its traditional prerogatives and institutional biases. While harassed and overworked mid-level officials in the executive branch might initially have welcomed the absence of Congress' customary micromanagement, they soon found that they were unable to get prompt, effective guidance from their own senior managers. Then, when congressional appropriations committees reviewed the results, they often balked at the proposed projects, further delaying the program. Throughout, turf fights among agencies, weak mediation by the president's staff, and interventions and visits to Russia by senior officials in other agencies distracted the action officers.

No agency has been immune. Like President Bush before him, President Clinton hesitated to offend his secretary of state by designating a single individual responsible to him for the coordination and management of all federal efforts to assist Russia and Ukraine. Strobe Talbott's promotion to deputy secretary of state in early 1994 left a vacuum—though if the truth be told and contrary to widespread impression, he never filled such a role effectively. While from time to time he has intervened to support reform and denuclearization in Ukraine, Talbott's appetite for the details of management has been limited.

The Agency for International Development (AID), relegated to the background during the Bush-Baker era, maneuvered during the first year of the Clinton administration to seize operational control of the aid effort in Russia and Ukraine. Predictably, the impact of AID, an agency more accustomed to promoting development in Rwanda than to creating democracy and capitalism in a superpower, has been stifling, as it has attempted to impose its Byzantine practices on often bewildered Russian officials. Some of them however, have adjusted readily to AID procedures; Russian privatization minister Anatoliy Chubays quickly found ways to attract almost $200 million to support his voucher privatization program. In an effort to deal with the problem, AID has imported one of Washington's most skilled foreign policy operatives, Tom Dine, to energize and focus its program. Surrounded by AID careerists, and charged with management of programs in Central Europe, the Caucasus, and Central Asia, as well as Ukraine and Russia, his energy has been sapped by extensive travel, and the promised new focus did not begin to emerge until late 1994. Outside Foggy Bottom, a joint U.S.-Russian commission under Vice President Gore and Prime Minister Chernomyrdin has tried to coordinate policy and negotiations between the two countries; but Gore has never allocated funds, which remains the prerogative of the state and defense departments.

The Department of Defense, unable to move beyond providing air transportation for humanitarian emergency aid during the Bush administration, received authority to spend up to $400 million for the Nunn-Lugar program each fiscal year between 1992 and 1995, although its deliveries and disbursements have not yet totaled $100 million. Dr. William Perry, first as deputy secretary and then as secretary of defense, brought knowledge and enthusiasm to the task of helping Russia. Prior to his going to the Pentagon, Perry held a professorship at Stanford University, where his special interest was defense conversion. This has now come to supersede the original narrow objectives of nuclear dismantlement and non-proliferation called for in the Nunn-Lugar legislation. Ashton Carter, a Harvard professor who had helped Nunn sell the bill to skeptical colleagues in 1991, was appointed by Perry to head the policymaking element of the Nunn-Lugar program. Carter and Perry recruited a number of young associates without Pentagon experience to run the program.

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By the time in early 1994 that the new policy team secured the bilateral agreements needed to undertake actual work in Russia and Ukraine, they had managed to lose $318 million of the initial $800 million provided for 1992-93. The lost authority technically expired after two years, to the surprise of top officials who were unaware of the problem because Ash Carter and his policy team had neglected to establish close relations with other parts of the executive branch and the defense committees of Congress. As a result, quiet opposition from other elements of the defense establishment frequently delayed the effort. The appointment of an experienced official to oversee the Defense Nuclear Agency's implementation of the program did not come until the summer of 1994. His effectiveness in implementing the Nunn-Lugar program has been restricted by the continuing influence the now discredited policy shop has on Perry.

Until recently, few probing questions have been raised about the aid programs within the executive branch or by Congress. With responsible officials struggling to show results without breaking any of the complex federal procurement laws, few staff members undertook rigorous oversight of a program backed by the president and the bipartisan congressional leadership. Little was heard from the General Accounting Office or the Office of Management and Budget. Hearings before the congressional appropriations committees identified a number of problems, but received little further attention. More time was devoted by the Senate to the allocation of funds between Russia and Ukraine than to program content. In the House, however, objections have been raised to the Pentagon's move away from nuclear issues toward broader defense conversion efforts, and to rapid expansion of semi-private enterprise funds to promote joint investments.

In retrospect, it is evident that all American leaders simply assumed that conditions in Russia and Ukraine were ripe for peaceful intervention by the United States. They also assumed that somewhere in the vast federal complex there were men and women who knew with some precision what to do and how to do it. Although schemes to help the former Soviet Union were based on massive amounts of direct financial assistance, both the Nunn-Lugar programs and the AID technical assistance efforts largely excluded qualified Russian and Ukrainian institutions and firms from contracting and procurement efforts. The resulting "Made in America" effort to import everything (except housing) unnecessarily antagonized some of the Russians and Ukrainians who were most ready and able to work with American counterparts.

Recently, the aid effort has begun enlisting the for-profit private sector, often on a cost-share basis. The five enterprise funds[1], and the transfers of funds to government agencies that support foreign trade and investment (the Export-Import Bank, Overseas Private Investment Corporation, and the Trade and Development Agency), show some possibility of greater positive impact on Russia and Ukraine than does the massive influx of technical assistance consultants. While the latter may help, AID already recognizes the negative impact of continuing to contract for the bulk of its technical assistance though a small group of

[1]Russian-American Enterprise Fund (RAEF) focusing on small and medium-scale businesses; Fund for Large Enterprises in Russia (FLER) focusing on medium to large-sized enterprises emerging from the Russian mass privatization program; the U.S./European Regional Venture Fund (RVP) focusing on medium-sized private enterprises in the lower Volga region; the Defense Demilitarization Enterprise Fund, involving joint ventures with industries previously involved with the production of weapons of mass destruction and their delivery systems; and the Western New Independent States Enterprise Fund (WNISEF).

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international consulting firms whose annual cost per advisor (including housing, travel, security and corporate overhead) can exceed $400,000, and is moving to attract bids from a more diverse group.

The Clinton administration's decision to cut back on grant aid to Russia as it begins to engage seriously with Ukraine's new reformers demonstrates more skill and realism than the administration has shown in other regions. Too few details are presently known about the much larger technical assistance effort and exchange programs to characterize them as a success or failure, but the ongoing reduction in their size and scope will almost certainly continue, if only because fewer and fewer senior officials in the countries involved are willing to make the effort to sustain them. The perception exists that aid to Russia and Ukraine has not met expectations. Looking back, it is increasingly evident that there was no way the program could have done so.

Although future United States economic cooperation with Russia and Ukraine will depend mostly on the extent of commercial trade and investment links, a smaller (well under $1 billion per annum) grant aid program could serve the national interests of all three countries for the rest of the decade. For such a proposal to survive in Washington's radically changed environment, it would need to meet three criteria. First, it would have to meet shorter-term, *concrete* objectives identified by the assisted country (such as assuring energy supplies during Ukraine's adjustment to reform). Second, it would have to meet high priority American national security interests (such as returning the Nunn-Lugar program to its original narrow focus on the actual dismantlement of Russian nuclear and chemical weapons, as well as prudent disposition of their contents). And third, it would have to offer solid value for the money invested (which means no more American development and nuclear tourists whose U.S.-funded expenses amount to more per week than members of the Russian Academy of Sciences make in a year). □

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Japan's Asia Card

Ivan P. Hall

IS JAPAN, HAVING drawn its last drop of cultural strength from the West, about to turn its back and abscond with Asia, adding a new intellectual and ideological dimension to the economic co-prosperity sphere it has so dramatically resurrected? Those in the West who attend to geocultural matters have long predicted the "return" of Japan to its "Asian" roots, and we now find the Japanese themselves proclaiming the "Re-Asianization" of their country.

The old, bifurcated political map drawn in 1955, with both conservative and socialist camps outwardly hitched to foreign lodestars—to American security ties and anti-communism on one hand, and to a U.S.-sponsored "peace" constitution and European Marxism on the other—has been torn to shreds. In its place we may possibly see an implosion of formerly antagonistic ideological forces around a new "consensus" nationalism, and that could easily take as its first task the switching of Japanese national purpose and cultural orientation away from the West toward Asia.

As Japanese enthusiasts for a warmed-over pan-Asianism tug at the tillers of national self-definition and cultural diplomacy, we can at least expect some high swells of touchiness and disdain for the now overtaken West, and a froth of magisterial *vade mecums* for Asians still bobbing in the wake. One can only hope that with the new strength and self-esteem of the other Asian peoples, and Japan's own position in an increasingly transnational post-industrial civilization, Tokyo may eventually find its way to a mode of cultural dialogue that is less fixated on hierarchical power relationships, less dichotomous about East versus West, and more in keeping with its genuinely global needs and responsibilities.

Regrettably, we are now witnessing the latest replay of an unproductive, six-part cycle that it has yet to break out of. In the opening bars, Tokyo's leaders dissociate themselves from a "backward Asia," seeking to emulate and join the "advanced West;" next, this exercise in impersonation provokes a nationalistic reaction and Western condescension; in the third movement Japan's intellectuals and statesmen then expound the singularity of their country and its divergence from the West; fourth, their Western counterparts avidly concur that, indeed, Japan *is* different; fifth, Japan then turns emotionally and ideologically to a condescending and largely unsolicited "leadership" of Asia and to a resentful anti-Westernism; finally, that runs into a dead end, so it's *da capo*, all over again.

One macro-cycle ran from the forced-march Westernization of the 1870s to the traditionalist counter-thrusts of the 1880s and

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1890s and then through a series of perceived rejections by the West in the 1920s—Britain dropping its alliance in 1922, and America slamming the door on Japanese immigration in 1924—to the dalliance with Greater East Asia during the 1930s and World War II. We are today approaching stage five in a micro-cycle of trade liberalization spanning the past quarter century. This cycle began with Tokyo promising Western-style standards but pleading for time. As the United States and Europe began to lose patience and as domestic resistance built up in Japan in the 1970s, Japanese intellectuals built a cottage industry dedicated to the manufacturing of theories of "uniqueness" to justify special treatment for their country. But when European and American revisionist writers of the late 1980s joined this exploration of Japanese dissimilarity, Tokyo cried "Foul!" and complained of Western cultural absolutism. The upshot, from the early part of this decade, has been a Japan turning to the notion of "Asian values"—an expansion of the earlier "uniqueness" gambit—as a common regional shield against further U.S. trade-related pressures.

In a recent Japanese poll, 60 percent thought their country should place equal emphasis on Asia and the West (the United States and Europe), with only 6 percent favoring a tilt toward the West and 28 percent opting for a tilt toward Asia.[1] This nearly two-thirds vote for equidistance, with "Asia First" supporters approaching one third, already represents a major shift away from the Westward-looking postwar orthodoxy. It is also a trend that is likely to continue. Indeed, as Japan's media tout an alleged clash between Asian and Western values—and dwell with some relish on the Clinton administration's failed pressures for human rights in China and numerical targets for Japan trade—cooler heads have had to warn that the security, trade, and environmental challenges in the region can hardly be met without a continued U.S. presence, and that a fairer break on economic access would be the chief incentive for that. Furthermore, over two-thirds of the Japanese between the ages of twenty and forty in the survey judged their country to be "disliked" by other Asians—an implicit admission of the long, steep road ahead.

Old Reflexes...

JAPAN'S PERIODS OF identification with Asia have typically expressed themselves in grandiose, holistic, pan-Asianist terms—more reminiscent of America's postwar appointment of itself as defender of "Western Civilization" against the Stalinist menace than of the quiet, steady flows that defined our earlier view of cultural relations across the Atlantic.

Japan's recurrent pan-Asianist paradigm, simply expressed, is that of two posts and a lintel. On one side a solidified Asia, much put upon and brimming with resentment; on the other an equally monistic but predatory West; and between the two a cultural gap spanned only by Japan, which towers above the Orient and serves as its cultural spokesman to the Occident. The Japanese sense of draconian alternatives was first honed by the early Meiji Period slogans of "Escape from Asia" (*datsu-A*) and "Joining Europe [the West]" (*nyu-O*)—terms that are still very much in use along with their increasingly fashionable inversions, *datsu-O* and *nyu-A*—while the visual finality of their Chinese ideograms, like red or green traffic lights, further impedes the conceptualization of more nuanced, intermediate choices.

Geographically speaking, although Japan's economic power is now felt throughout the Asian continent, the psychologically intimate "Asia" of the Japanese mind encompasses mainly China, Korea and Southeast Asia, closely fitting the area marked in prewar ideology for the Greater East Asia Co-Prosperity Sphere. Leaving out the "white" nations of Australia and New Zealand (despite strong economic links), as well as the

[1] *Asahi Shimbun*, August 23, 1994.

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Indian and other peoples of South Asia (despite ancient cultural ties), these boundaries reflect a natural but powerful fellow-Mongolian racial consciousness.

Historically, Japan's past flings with pan-Asianism have been marred by failure to assume a more egalitarian posture toward the rest of Asia, by hyperbolic rejections of the West, and by the sterility of a strictly intra-Japanese monologue. Although certain Japanese liberals over the decades have envisioned the non-exploitative nurturing of an Asian comity of nations, Japanese nationalism has always intruded to provoke its counterpart elsewhere, as the Janus face of worship-the-West and eschew-the-East simply switches its Asian mask from one of rejection to that of imperious orchestration—best expressed today by the "flying geese" development model for which Tokyo, at least, imagines a permanent Japanese lead. Even the selling of the Pacific War and the old Co-Prosperity Sphere as a struggle for the liberation of Asia did not come into play until the severe military setbacks of 1943, having until then been couched in terms of Japan's self-defense and resource needs—the expansion of its own empire.

Japan also finds it difficult to re-enter Asia without denigrating the West, or to celebrate the rise and creativity of its own region without invoking Occidental decline. The inflation of cultural threats is suggested by the odd way in which many Japanese still put the argument in terms of resisting Christianity—a force that has achieved less than 1 percent penetration in Japan and has long been on the defensive in a secularizing West. In his 1976 call for a return to Buddhism, philosopher Takeshi Umehara characterized Christianity as a "blood-stained" religion and its civilization as one of power, assault, and combativeness. Right-wing publicist Hideaki Kase complained to foreign journalists in 1988 of a century's onslaught by Christianity on Japan. And political scientist Yonosuke Nagai in 1994 traced the U.S. containment of communism to the anti-heterodox impulses of Christian theology.[2] What all this hides is probably less concern about Christian religion, in which Japan has very little interest, than vexation with the pressure placed on traditional values by Western rationalism and industrial society; it recalls the yearning of Japan's prewar ideologues for "overcoming modernity."

Pan-Asianist ideology in Japan, short on input or feedback from other Asians, has to date served mainly as an extension of domestic chauvinism. One can hope that the old reflexes will simply prove to be transitional, as the current surge in student, arts and sports exchanges; in two-way travel; in new Asian language electives; and in prime-time programming on everything from Tibetan burial customs to train rides in northern Burma gradually transform "Asia" from a mere slogan into a compelling human reality. For the moment, the hype often grates, with its too obvious evidence of pre-arrangement, as in Fuji Television pan-Asian singing contests where young Asians in traditional dress are cheered along in English—the only language they all understand—by a breathless bilingual lady emcee, who then turns to analyze it all for the television in Japanese. More serious conceptual barriers to the real Asia persist in Japan's approach to regional cultural diplomacy, its advocacy of allegedly shared values, and its legacy of wartime bitterness.

...And New Tricks

THE OLD PAN-ASIANIST touch was evident in the cultural policy recommendations for North- and South-East Asia presented at the Second Asia-Pacific Conference in May of 1991, after a year's

[2]Umehara in *Nihon Bunkaron* (On Japanese Culture), (Tokyo: Kodansha International, 1976), pp. 53-54; Kase in a speech to the Foreign Correspondents Club of Japan, September 26, 1988; Nagai as reported in *Asahi Shimbun* evening edition, September 14, 1994.

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preparation by a panel of scholars under the aegis of the Treasury and Foreign Ministry. As their sole Western commentator, I was struck by the emphasis on creating a new "organic cultural sphere." This appeal to unity was based on anti-colonialist and anti-white resentment, the old dichotomy of "Eastern spirit" versus "Western technology," the put-downs of Western rationalism and "modernity," the same autistic insensitivity to Japan's neighbors (once again, apparently not consulted), and the presumptuous proposal for an Asian press center in Tokyo to "deliver the ABCs of Asian coverage" to Western journalists. Calls for the construction of imposing pan-Asian cultural centers in capital cities and the staging of flashy events betrayed an expectation that the powerful initiatives by Japan could produce the sort of regional cultural blend that, in other areas of the world, has been the product of centuries of unprogrammed development.[3]

Tokyo's cultural stance in the broader trans-Pacific APEC region emerged with its proposal, just before the November 1993 Seattle summit, for an Asia-Pacific exchanges conference that would help remove an alleged "psychological wall" separating the United States and developing Asian nations. Echoing the government's new theme of American insensitivity was a press cartoon featuring Bill Clinton on a dog sled, whip in hand, stunned as Asia's leaders break out of husky harness to scamper away muttering, "Can you really expect *him* to understand Asia?" American negotiators and opinion leaders should rebut Tokyo's concoction of a mid-Pacific cultural divide as a means of enlisting its entire region against U.S. market-opening pressures and posing as the guardian of Asian economic chastity. Compared to Japan's tightly hoisted drawbridges, lowered only to let the economic samurai out, American political, intellectual, and human ties in the postwar period have spanned the region like a freeway cloverleaf—in immigration, intermarriage, refugees, university ties, and in professional opportunities for Asian artists, scholars, and journalists. Japan should be asked to forge its long overdue Asian links on its own merits and stop trying to gain points by painting the U.S. as a common economic and cultural threat.

The immediate business of Japan's "cultural gap" ploy is to encourage and amplify the recent postulation by certain Asians of a monolithic set of common values under attack by Western cultural absolutism. After fighting in Korea and Vietnam to save Japan and Southeast Asia for democracy and capitalism, what an irony it would be if we now watched the region link arms to reduce American participation under the culturalist rubric that U.S.-style free markets, political liberalism, and individual rights don't really suit their preferences for guided development, "Confucian" paternalism, and group ethics. To the counter-arguments previously advanced in these pages, I should simply like to add two.[4]

On the celebration of Confucian survivals, a distinction needs to be made between the so-called "Little Tradition" of ancient and extraordinarily stable Confucian popular ethics—still alive in education, workplace, and family life—and the "Grand Tradition" of Mandarin-led, theoretically benevolent, bureaucratic government with its rationalization of political autocracy. The late nineteenth- and early twentieth-century Chinese and Japanese reformers who viewed the Confucian legacy of agrarianism, anti-commercialism, xenophobia, bureaucratism and imperial authoritarianism as the greatest obstacle to modernization must be turning in their tombs, along with Japan's Edo-Period Shintoist scholars who reviled the

[3]See the report, "Bunka Shakaimen Kenkyu Gurupu Hokoku" (Final Report of the Cultural and Social Study Group), Second Asia-Pacific Conference, FAIR (Foundation for Advanced Information and Research), Tokyo, 1991.

[4]See *The National Interest* (Spring 1994) and (Summer 1994).

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rigid Confucian canons as the bane of Japan's native literary and human sensibilities.

Second, throughout Asian history there has been a broad awareness of the individual as a morally self-directed and responsible entity—in the Brahmin's lonely working out of his individual karma, in the Buddhist's progress toward enlightenment, and in the sort of proto-liberalism which the late Sinologist John King Fairbank noted in the personal integrity and humanistic self-cultivation of the traditional Confucian gentleman-scholar. Indeed, only in warrior-dominated Tokugawa Japan (and some of its modern projections) and in the Maoist attempt to mold a New Man have Asians come anywhere close to creating the sort of self-denying automaton touted by the region's latter-day prophets of political obedience.

The greatest "cultural gap," of course, remains Japan's reluctance to liquidate the emotional residue of its past aggression in Asia and dissolve suspicion among its former victims regarding its true intentions in moving toward armed participation in peacekeeping operations and a permanent Security Council seat. Since their universalistic values are weak, and since justice ultimately comes down to the well-being of the collectivity—be it clique, company, or country—it is especially painful for the Japanese people to admit to any wrongdoing by their nation as a whole.

Asia on Japan

NO CLEAR, LET alone unified, Asian response to Japan's cultural wooing has emerged to date. Professed attitudes toward Japan depend a great deal on whether one has been talking to consumers and economic planners eager for goods and investment, to politicians still playing the old "aggression card," to an elder generation with bitter memories, or to younger intellectuals looking for new and non-Western self-definitions. The nature of Asia's future links with Japan will in any case depend far less on cultural than on economic, political, and military considerations—including the nature and extent of America's future commitment to the area.

Since Japan itself has couched the argument in terms of cultural affinity, it is worth recalling the continent's bewildering diversity of traditional civilizations, even leaving out Muslim West Asia. Islam and former colonial influences pull South and Southeast Asia more to the west—toward Mecca and London—than north toward the Confucian orbit, which protrudes southward only into Vietnam and the overseas Chinese communities. Malaysian Muslims and Filipino Catholics have Creator-centered, Western-style religions doctrinally incompatible with this-worldly Confucianism or Japan's group absolutisms. Buddhism, long since extruded from its Indian birthplace by an enduring Hinduism, still supplies in its stricter *Theravada* form the core of social life and national identity in Thailand, Burma, and Sri Lanka, while its broader *Mahayana* version yielded primacy to Confucianism in traditional China (and "ultra-Confucian" Korea) and was heavily infiltrated by Shinto in Japan—where eclectic assimilation has given a unique Japanese twist to every Asian import.

Traditional cultures aside, the region today is differentiated by the politico-cultural divide between communist and non-communist states, by divergent intellectual residues of colonialism, by emotional gradations in anti-Japanese sentiment, by rival conceptions of "Asia," and by dissimilar ties with Japan's primary partner, the United States. Samuel P. Huntington, writing on "The Clash of Civilizations?" (*Foreign Affairs*, Summer 1993), titillated Japanese readers with his sharp East-West fault lines—and his grand cultural zonings, not in fashion since Toynbee—only to upset them with his clear-cut demarcation of their own country from the rest of Asia. Although some even suspected a politically motivated point here, Japan does have a backlog of bilateral business blocking any common cultural approach to Asia.

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Proof of the Pudding

KOREA (FOR NOW, the South) will be the litmus test of Japan's willingness to surmount its past. Nowhere do grudges run deeper than in Japan's cultural sibling—closest in race and language, in corporate and educational ethos, and in a joint intellectual inheritance from China and the West. Unprocessed rage at Japan's colonial attempt to eradicate Korean cultural identity continues to break out—in the decision to tear down the massive former Japanese capitol building in Seoul, in the barely-lifted ban on performing Japanese popular music, and in the recent vandalizing of a Japanese art exhibit. Christianity, in part a riposte to Japan, now commands a third of the population, and anti-Americanism among certain younger Korean intellectuals does not translate into follow-Japan sentiment. Some pragmatists in Seoul now call for a more normal emotional tie, but Tokyo seems to be counting on its economic leverage rather than an atonement that signifies a genuine change in Japanese attitudes and is psychologically credible to the Koreans.

At the opposite extreme, Malaysia has gratified Japan with its "Look East" economic and educational policies, as has Singapore with its resolutely dichotomizing "school" of West-versus-Rest pundits. At the risk of never being allowed to set foot in Kuala Lumpur or the Lion City again, I suspect that the Japanese—avoiding offense to America by letting others do the talking—have been very much behind Malaysia's proposal for an East Asian Economic Caucus which they would handily dominate; and that Singapore's self-generated harping on incompatible values—with a command of English idiom, Oxford Union oratory, and Western guilt buttons far beyond that of the Japanese—has served Tokyo's policy goals well. Prime Minister Mahathir's startling suggestion that the Japanese stop apologizing about the war reflects, of course, the preferred treatment which ethnic Malays received during the occupation in contrast to the Chinese, as well as the wartime education in Japan of a number of still-active national leaders. In Singapore, where the Chinese suffered horribly, the distaste for human rights probably has less to do with the glint of Japan-harnessed economic growth than with Mr. Lee Kuan Yew's desire to strengthen political ties with China.

Whereas America's intellectual presence in Britain's former possessions has always been peripheral and subject to a certain colonially-transmitted disdain, Japan's newly funded institutes, chairs, book distributions and academic exchanges with the Philippines and Thailand flow into the void of receding, or at best static, U.S. cultural and informational activity resulting from the sharp reduction in former strategic ties. Economic, sentimental, and family links to the United States, wartime memories, and sheer temperamental exuberance will keep Filipinos chary of any heavy-handed Japanese cultural embrace, but in Bangkok—as one Thai professor friend recently put it to me, scrunching his shoulders to make the point—"The American ambassador looks *sooo* small, compared to the Japanese." Thailand, with its parallel history as the only other non-colonized modernizer in Asia, its shared monarchical tradition, and its ancient skill in adjusting to new power balances, is moving self-assuredly toward closer cultural ties with Japan. In an ironic reversal, Vietnam now openly calls for an American economic presence to balance Japan's, and the conceivable role of returning U.S.-based refugees as bridges between the two societies may someday establish the cultural price of Japan's stinginess in turning away so many of the "boat people."

Finally, what of Japan's two giant rivals for the mantle of "Asian" cultural leadership: China and India? Tokyo's concern with China today focuses far more on economic, political, and military tangibles, while the Chinese have hardly shed their traditional view of the Japanese as culturally peripheral—if technologically adept—barbarians, and

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retain a historical mistrust of Tokyo-sponsored campaigns on behalf of Sino-Japanese "brotherhood" and "friendship." Chinese inclinations toward Confucian magnanimity and Buddhist forgetting cannot erase the reality of millions of lives lost during the war. Japan's obtuseness with this historical fact was inadvertently betrayed by a Tokyo editorial writer who returned from Hong Kong not so long ago amazed by the way the Chinese and British got along with each other in spite of the Opium War of 1842, and puzzling over what was missing in the Japanese approach.

The sleeper in the cultural game may prove to be India, should it shift its political and cultural attention from West to East and vigorously re-enter the cultural zone which it once enriched with its religion, philosophy, and art. Several strengths conceivably could override negative reviews pertaining to its slower economy, caste society, and ethnic quarrels. Indian experience in holding together the world's most diverse nation for nearly half a century—without revolutionary paroxysm or military takeover, and according to Western-derived secular governance—is clearly the *political* miracle of postwar Asia. Indian familiarity with Western intellectual idiom also positions it as the most effective rhetorical bridge, a sort of "Super Singapore" capable of mercilessly twitting the Occident if it so chooses—and especially America, with which political ties have never been close. More to the point, any *cultural* definition of Asian togetherness will eventually have to go beyond the materialistic appeal of Japanese or Chinese economic performance to something more of the mind and spirit. And as India's preeminent cultural spokesman and pan-Asianist in this century, Rabindranath Tagore, learned during his visits to Japan in 1916 and China in 1924, the "Asias" of the Samurai, Mandarin, and Brahmin are different indeed.[5]

India's philosophical bent for tolerance and inclusion, and its preservation of a medley of traditional cultures as the rest of Asia goes looking for its withered roots, could give it the last laugh in a bargain with the modernization devil that was the reverse of Japan's (leave aside the Maoist ruination of China's heritage). Alarmed precisely by India's political subjugation and its cultural bifurcation into an English-speaking, Westernized elite riding a multitude "mired" in tradition, Japan opted for an integrated but hybrid modern civilization with leaders and masses sharing a twice-thinned mix of extracted Western culture and attenuated Japanese tradition, sustained by a permanent political ideology of external imperilment. The dualistic "both-and" of India's looser amalgam—with its deeper accessing of both Western universalism and time-honored roots—may just possibly have more to say to the coming century than the unsettled tension of Japan's "neither-nor," which crops up repeatedly in its sense of cultural loss, its awkwardness in dealing with the outside world, and its outbreaks of xenophobic nationalism.

Asians today worry less about two Japanese faces than about none, as Tokyo fails to clarify (or deliberately veils) its intentions toward their region. The one face Asians as a group do see is that turned toward their students in Japan, where discrimination in housing, difficulty in making friends, and ceilings on advancement in Japanese companies suggest that Tokyo may be risking an output of one hundred thousand foes rather than fans as it approaches its foreign-student goal for the year 2000. (As for Westerners, who are present mainly as teachers, a 1992 directive from the Ministry of Education pushing for the retirement of all foreign staff over age fifty at national universities, with a ban on new hires over age forty, substantiates the ingrained resistance of the Japanese to any serious foreign involvement in their cultural institutions.)

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[5]See the superb study by Stephen N. Hay, *Asian Ideas of East and West: Tagore and His Critics in Japan, China and India*, (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1970).

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Sayonara Uncle Sam?

JAPAN'S RELATIONSHIP with the United States is marked by a distancing that expresses itself primarily in a new tone of contempt. Unlike the earlier anti-Americanisms of Japan's political left (which did not rule out an admiration for American ideals or a personal liking for Americans) or of the politico-cultural right (whose paeans to U.S. Cold War policy veiled its gut antipathy), this new virus reflects a pervasively perceived erosion of both American virtue and power. This is partly the result—as some tried to warn—of talking tough to Japan about trade without meaning it, or of actually getting tough without being prepared to handle the emotional backlash. The Japanese, who are quicker than most to bow to *force majeure* and cooperate with perceived moral superiors, are also "peculiarly sensitive to the smell of decay" and quickest to resent abuse from a morally flabby, retreating hegemon.[6]

The abstract, politically connoted term *han-bei* (anti-America) has been superseded by the more personal *ken-bei* (dislike of America) and *bu-bei* (contempt for America)—the character *bu* combining visual nastiness with the scorn which the Japanese ear associates with the lip-voiced sonant "b" (like the Bronx cheer overtones of "boob" or "blubber" in English). Although some of this rests on popular sentiment, one suspects that much of it was originally manufactured and then took on a life of its own. If fabricated, we might infer yet another attempt to frighten Uncle Sam with the specter of anti-Americanism, or, what now seems more likely, a strategy to prepare the Japanese public for an emotional break with America. The break will come if and when Tokyo decides—whether by grand design, or through the inertia of vested interests—that the effort to join the world by genuinely opening up Japan's economy and society is more troublesome than establishing a defensive primacy over its own region. An anesthesia of anti-American grievances may be required to neutralize the considerable residue of familiarity, trust, and even affection for the United States at the grass-roots level, and to numb any anxiety over an untested recoil onto Japan's own technological inferiors.

We are already witnessing a media buildup to the fiftieth anniversary of the atomic bomb next summer, when the Japanese possibly may use the immolation of Hiroshima and Nagasaki as the occasion to finally admit their wartime responsibility one-sidedly towards Asia, position themselves among the victims of the West, and shift the opprobrium to America. Certainly, the unreconstructed "neo-nationalists" are ready to make such an argument, if the comments of Ryutaro Hashimoto, Minister for International Trade and Industry, are representative. He recently declared it a fact that Japan "had no intention of fighting the area's inhabitants...It was not those [Asian] countries Japan chose to fight, but the United States, England, and others." Further, he was "not willing to say we fought a war of aggression in World War II."[7] At the climactic anniversary of the end of World War II, the U.S. will have to look sharp lest it squander the last significant V-J Day to make its own case.

Americans will also have to address Japan's overdrawn sense of victimization, which goes all the way back to Commodore Perry's black ships, and realize that there is little guilt or remorse towards the U.S. with respect to the Pacific conflict. Speaking for the government in August 1991, Deputy Chief Cabinet Secretary Nobuo Ishihara averred that "It will take tens or hundreds of years before the correct judgment is

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[6]See pages 38-39 of the prewar German economist Kurt Singer's *Mirror, Sword and Jewel*, (Tokyo: Kodansha International, 1981) which should be required reading for the entire U.S. foreign policy establishment.

[7]Reuter, *Asahi Evening News*, October 25, 1994, p. 4.

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delivered on who is responsible for the [Japan-U.S.] war,"[8] while former Prime Minister Noboru Takeshita is now famous for his private view that historians have yet to pin the blame on Hitler for the tragedy in Europe. Japan's leading Freudian theorist, Takeo Doi, writing of the cultivation of *higaisha ishiki* (victimization consciousness) among his countrymen has even gone so far as to surmise that "The Japanese tend to feel wronged and to dwell on their being imposed upon to the extent that such a state of mind becomes often an important ingredient of their identity."[9]

A typical Japanese docu-drama on the 1937-45 conflict might open with Mitsubishi bombers over China (politely, from a hazy height), proceed to sensational shots of the Pearl Harbor attack, continue with the metal *Niagara* of U.S. Navy offshore shelling (such brute force!), and conclude with the Hiroshima cloud and prostrate crowds sobbing outside the Imperial Palace. I myself once watched a Tokyo University historian conclude his educational TV account by remarking that the war had indeed been dreadful—but listing up only the Japanese casualties.

Unfortunately, the controversy over the Smithsonian's exhibit of the *Enola Gay*, planned for next summer, shows how close America's amnesiac postwar generation has come to losing its historical perspective on the Pacific War. Congress and the veterans, however, should have insisted less on playing down the sufferings of the Japanese than on playing up the pain inflicted by them, along with Tokyo's expansionist policies leading to the war and the suicidal fanaticism of military leaders willing to prolong it to the last sixth-grader. Indeed, the most effective antidote to the predictable binge of Japanese self-pity next August would be the counter-testimony of a richly visual American documentary film on the recorded behavior of Japan's militarists, fascists, and ultranationalists at home and abroad from 1931 to 1945 to illustrate what the U.S. was fighting against and what it would have faced in any invasion. Let the film be a bit partisan and pro-American for a change—sponsored if need be by the veterans' organizations themselves, funded exclusively from American coffers, and unencumbered by any bi-national committee fudging up a "balanced" view. The Japanese, after all, have never asked Americans to contribute any balance to their own heavily slanted documentaries and dramas about the war.

On the economic front, the U.S. will either have to fork out the additional political capital required to open markets in Asia, or stop annoying its APEC partners to no good purpose through unilateral pressures and entrust its economic future to the new World Trade Organization—precisely what the Japanese would like to have us do, sealing their triumph at a quarter century of stonewalling. Either way, Washington should never allow itself to be outflanked by the sort of Japanese propaganda that, at the collapse of the Clinton-Hosokawa summit last February, succeeded in portraying the U.S. to the world as the protectionist offender.

American cultural and information officials will have to shed their Cold War shyness about risking any possible offense to the Japanese and engage the economic dynamo of East Asia with all the ardor once lavished on the communist challenge, albeit with a very different tone and message. America's public intellectuals, too, will have to become more involved with the ideas, visions, hopes, and rhetoric of the region if they do not want the coming inter-Asian rapprochements to take on a gratuitously distant and exclusionary tone toward us. At the very least, clearer perceptions and sharpened forensic skills will be required if the U.S. wants to cope constructively with the changing attitudes of the Japanese toward Asia and America, and of Asians toward Japan. □

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[8] *Japan Times*, August 16, 1991.

[9] Takeo Doi, "A Psychiatrist's View On *Zeitgeist*," *Solidarity* (Manila), August 1971, p. 19.

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Asia-Pacific:
The Case for Geopolitical Optimism

James L. Richardson

UNCERTAINTIES concerning the nature of the emerging international order are nowhere greater than in the vast region of the Asia-Pacific. Prognoses concerning the political future range from expectations that economic growth will bring democratization, respect for human rights and peace, to forebodings that latent historical animosities, cultural cleavages, demographic and ecological pressures, and the rivalries and arms races characteristic of changing power balances foreshadow a turbulent future—and quite possibly, a disastrous one.

The optimism of economists on the prospects for continuing growth is at odds with the pessimism with which strategists contemplate potential security threats, but the tensions between these two approaches are for the most part addressed quite perfunctorily. What is needed is not only to link these dimensions, but to place them in a broader political setting. The more imaginative and challenging attempts to do this, like the "clash of civilizations" thesis with its alarming implications, are often marred by Western ethnocentrism. This is true of a recent broad-ranging survey, in many ways illuminating, by Barry Buzan and Gerald Segal, writing in *Survival*, the journal of the International Institute for Strategic Studies.[1]

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The assumptions made and the conclusions reached by these two European authors bear close examination, for they help clarify the problems involved in contemplating the region's future.

A Pessimistic Reading

BUZAN AND SEGAL offer a uniformly pessimistic reading of the legacies of history—unresolved rivalries, above all that between China and Japan; border disputes along the Sino-Russian, Sino-Indian and Russo-Japanese frontiers; and potential flashpoints such as Taiwan, the South China Sea, and the two Koreas. China, determined to reassert its traditional preeminence, claims the right to change the territorial status quo; Japan is politically enfeebled by hostility stemming from its occupation of most of the region during the Second World War; and the smaller states fear domination by either power. Tensions are heightened by the uneven pace of economic development and uneven coping with the pressures of modernization. More generally, the historical legacies point to "political fragmentation and hostility:" as Cold War distortions unravel, suppressed historical patterns reappear. "There is little that binds [the region's] states and societies together," they

[1]Barry Buzan and Gerald Segal, "Rethinking East Asian Security," *Survival* (Summer 1994), pp. 3-21.

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conclude, "but much that divides them."

Most of the specific observations made by Buzan and Segal are right in themselves—there are indeed many sources of tension and unresolved issues, and a few potential flashpoints of great concern—but overall their analysis lacks balance. It neglects successful diplomatic efforts to resolve or defuse conflicts by ASEAN (the Association of Southeast Asian Nations), for example, and the region's extensive economic cooperation, including that between Japan and China. It overlooks the new self-confidence in the successful societies of the region, the sense of release from centuries of Western domination, of new opportunities, and indeed of the prospect of out-performing the West. Why should these opportunities, these shared interests and aspirations, be forfeited to the pursuit of ancient conflicts in which the stakes are relatively minor? Making due allowance for special cases such as Korea and Taiwan, are the legacies of past conflicts so serious as to outweigh the common interests which have opened up in the present?

There is less to question in Buzan and Segal's account of the military balance. While they draw attention to the arms build-up in the region, they rightly conclude that it does not amount to an arms race. Except in Korea, "there are as yet no highly focused competitive arms accumulations," though they acknowledge that, should North Korea acquire nuclear weapons, the risk of South Korea, Japan and even Taiwan doing the same is particularly disturbing.[2] They properly acknowledge some significant countervailing tendencies, such as Japan's anti-militarist attitudes and the advantages of strategic insulation by water. That said, however, their equation of the reduction in the American military presence with a power vacuum gives currency to alarmist imagery, and while they correctly point out that the region has limited historical experience of "indigenous modern international relations," the suggestion that the situation might have a parallel in the relations "emerging out of the wreckage of the Soviet Union, where a group of wholly new states have both to find their feet and work out their interrelationships," shows a readiness to write off the diplomatic experience of several decades as well as to ignore huge differences in the two situations. As in much current strategic analysis, where argument falters, imagery is recruited to help out.

Buzan and Segal offer several reasons why increasing economic interdependence may not make for regional cooperation or remove incentives for war. East Asia's involvement in the global economy is highly uneven—the most striking case of non-involvement being the interior regions of China—and most Asian states retain extensive forms of non-tariff protection. Where there is interdependence, it is more global than regional, and where it is regional, it tends to mask relations of dominance and dependence. The dependence implied in interdependence could leave East Asia highly vulnerable—indeed "in the weakest position of all the major industrial centers"—in the event of a breakdown in the management of the global economy, a contingency which the authors consider should be taken seriously. And if it is the presence of democratic government rather than economic interdependence which renders war unlikely in the West, Asia's authoritarian political cultures render conflict and misunderstanding among them all the more likely.

Allowing that these points in themselves have some substance, the argument reads more as an advocate's brief than a balanced analysis. It is rather facile, for example, to assume that Japan's extensive trade and investment links in the region amount to dominance, and the burgeoning investment in China from Taiwan and the overseas Chinese certainly cannot be seen in this

[2]The argument of neorealist theorists that nuclear proliferation would be a stabilizing factor meets with as little acceptance among strategic analysts as in the public at large.

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light. Even if one shares the authors' skepticism concerning the "governance" of the global economy, the political and financial influence of those engaged in global transactions appears sufficient to rule out a return to the 1930s levels of protectionism—and short of a breakdown of those dimensions, East Asia is the region best able to achieve unequivocal gains from interdependence. In the industrialized West, intensified interdependence may bring gains, but it also involves very significant costs in the form of unemployment and social polarization. Elsewhere, there is the increasing deprivation of those unable to compete in the global marketplace. It goes without saying that the region's rapid economic advance is fraught with tension, at present most visible in China, but the balance sheet needs to take account of strengths as well as vulnerabilities.

The same point applies to Buzan and Segal's discussion of the final dimension of security, "international society." No doubt security can be enhanced where it is underpinned by numerous multilateral networks and institutions, but is it appropriate to apply European yardsticks so confidently, as the authors do—especially when the limitations of the European institutions have been so painfully exposed in the former Yugoslavia? It is true that, in contrast to Europe, there are few formal multilateral institutions in East Asia, but Buzan and Segal's assessment of those few is far too negative—a point to which I shall return below. More importantly, they do not take account of implicit and informal networks which have existed for some time, nor of the widely shared Asian preference for proceeding gradually, relying on informal understandings rather than formal rules and institutions. They go on to argue that the weakness of international society reflects the prevalence of weak states in the region—a generalization that recalls the long-discarded domino theory. Allowing that there are some notable weak states, such as Cambodia, and that the political future of China is among the greatest uncertainties, the region has more than its share of strong states (the newly industrialized countries), and the states of Southeast Asia have consolidated to the point that their security policies are driven more by external than internal concerns.

Given Buzan and Segal's premises, their conclusion would indeed follow: East Asia's future would be determined by power politics much more than by interdependence. But there is no reason to concede their premises. This does not mean that the alternative prognosis—peaceful interdependence—has been rendered plausible. The authors raise legitimate and fundamental questions concerning that prognosis: it is their answers to those questions that, lacking balance, fail to convince.

Historical Legacies

THE LESSONS OF history are open to contradictory readings, and a concentration on earlier patterns can blind observers to the potential for innovation. What was there in the previous five centuries of European history, for example, dominated as they were by the rivalries and wars of the great powers, which pointed towards the integration of Western Europe after 1945? If East Asian history can be characterized in terms of "fragmentation and hostility"—and which history cannot?—this does not establish that the end of the Cold War will restore that familiar pattern. Arguably, East Asia's traditional patterns have been more thoroughly disrupted than any others. A Sinocentric system gave way to fragmentation through Western dominance; the indigenous reaction, nationalism, was constrained by the Cold War in complex ways; and the region now finds itself propelled into the forefront of global economic growth. The crucial question, in Asia as in Europe, is how today's elites respond to *their* reading of the relevant history, in a present which is radically different from earlier historical settings.

Recent history has burdened the region

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with its share of conflicts, the most serious of which stem directly from the Cold War—the division of Korea, the weakness of the former Indochina and the uncertain status of Taiwan, each of which has the potential to generate major tensions. Longer historical memories underlie the Russo-Japanese dispute over the apparently secondary issue of the "northern islands." At the height of the Cold War the United States discouraged compromise; more recently, while the strategic significance of the islands for Russia has declined, the political sensitivity of making territorial concessions has increased. The use of force being ruled out, Japan cannot offer economic incentives sufficient to outweigh these political costs, and perhaps prefers not to, seeing no reason to assist Russia in becoming a more active power in Northeast Asia. But this has less to do with historical memories than with straightforward realpolitik.

In other instances of territorial conflict stemming from the period of European expansion—most notably the disputes over China's borders which led to war with India and acute tensions with Russia at moments in the Cold War—the parties have proved willing and able to negotiate practical agreements. While these have not required a renouncing of historical claims, they have permitted agreements to demarcate the lines of actual territorial control, a reduction of military tensions and a normalization of relations (including, in the Sino-Russian case, an upsurge in cross-border trade). Such claims could, no doubt, be revived in the future, but this would be a matter of political calculation in the context of redefined interests, not simply an expression of historical animosities. The important point is not the existence of historical grievances, but the manner in which they are addressed: especially since the waning of the Cold War, the governments of the region have done so pragmatically, or have set them aside in the interests of practical collaboration.

Generalizations about fragmentation and an absence of unifying factors in the region do scant justice to the experience of ASEAN, whose members have substantially enhanced their diplomatic influence through maintaining solidarity towards outsiders and through setting contentious issues aside if they cannot reach internal accommodations. In pre-colonial times, Southeast Asia had a degree of cultural unity but experienced frequent warfare among its empires and kingdoms. Neither this unpromising heritage nor the separateness imposed by colonial rule has prevented the original five (now six) members from forming an exceptionally cohesive politico-diplomatic association, one which is planning to accept additional members, and one whose annual ministerial meetings now provide the venue for whatever region-wide security dialogue may emerge at governmental level.

Economic Perspectives

EVEN THOUGH A degree of skepticism is in order concerning the more euphoric projections that export-led growth in East Asia will lead to all good things politically—democracy, respect for human rights, peace—there are solid grounds for regarding the region's economic dynamism as the primary influence shaping its prospects, at least in the medium term, and as favoring peaceful external policies, if not necessarily the full range of political reforms anticipated in the West. The premise, of course, is that sustained economic growth in the region is likely to continue. Assuming that international markets remain reasonably open, the precedent of the newly industrialized countries (South Korea, Taiwan, Hong Kong and Singapore) suggests that China, the members of ASEAN and possibly other neighboring states may indeed be able to sustain export-led growth, while the original NICs continue to move up the ladder of technological sophistication. Since there are now more countries seeking to export clothing, textiles and other light man-

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ufactures, however, and since they are far more populous, it may be doubted that their rates of growth can remain as spectacular as previously—at least, unless greater impetus comes from internal markets.

This points to even greater competitiveness among the next generation of NICs, especially if India is included, but this in turn is likely to enhance the incentives for restraint in foreign policy. In a competitive setting, a state which manifestly violates international norms is likely to incur serious penalties. The use of force to maintain internal order is another matter, but here international opinion is likely to be divided. While harsh measures could be a source of international tension, there are always likely to be powerful voices for maintaining "business as usual." Moreover, although rapid growth can generate its own internal tensions, it offers a far more favorable setting than economic stagnation for averting major civil conflict.

Because the region ranks as the only clear winner in the present competitive global economy, and can look to the prospect of joining the West, if not replacing it, at the apex of the system, its member states have every reason to avoid the kind of internecine conflict which, twice this century, accelerated Europe's loss of its pre-eminence in world affairs. Whereas the Europeans took their superiority for granted, the Asians know that theirs is still to be won. They are assisted by political geography: the distances between the major capitals are far greater than in Europe, and the powers do not jostle against one another in the same way. Nor do they have a tradition of fighting hegemonic wars, as did the Europeans over five centuries. Projections by European analysts which assume that this kind of Western pattern is likely to be repeated in East Asia show little regard for the interests of the states in question in a historical setting quite different from the former European one. Buzan and Segal, to their credit, acknowledge that the United States and Europe might indeed "welcome a deterioration in security relations within Asia...[t]he rise in tensions would prolong the West's view of itself as being more civilized than the rest of the world and would give it more leverage over Japan and China." There are indications that some Asians are aware of this potential Western interest, and of their own interest in circumventing it.

That said, it is to be conceded that states are not always rational actors pursuing their own best interests, and although there are substantial reasons for expecting East Asian governments to maintain the priorities which have brought unprecedented economic success, history seldom moves so smoothly over such an extended time span. Moreover, the global economy might not prove so hospitable to expanding Asian exports. Even if a 1930s-style collapse or retreat into autarky is unlikely, a general sluggishness and a disenchantment with globalization and free trade are quite conceivable. If Western societies are unable to deal effectively with their mounting social problems, they are likely to become more inward-looking and perhaps engage in a fundamental rethinking of goals and of the relationship between economics and politics. The supremacy of the market, the ruling norm of Western policy for a generation, would be unlikely to survive such rethinking.

Even if global markets remain open, one or more of the region's major economies may falter, for a variety of political and economic reasons. In this respect, China presents the most complex set of uncertainties. The Chinese themselves appear well aware that economic prosperity depends on political order. Beyond the immediate question of the political succession to Deng Xiaoping, there are the questions of legitimacy: Can the Communist Party find new ways of legitimizing one-party rule? If not, can there be an orderly transition to a new political system? How serious are the centrifugal forces which have led to the erosion of much of the effective power of the central authorities over the provinces, especially those experiencing

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the most rapid growth, and how serious are the tensions between the eastern seaboard, where the growth is concentrated, and the disadvantaged regions of the interior?[3] Even more fundamental are the ecological concerns. China's land, water, and forest resources are already subject to severe stresses. Can its ecosystem support the combination of further population growth and rapid development, especially if, as some analysts suggest, its agriculture is especially vulnerable to the early effects of global warming?

If some observers fear that a weakened China could pose the greatest threat of regional instability, others fear the consequences of China's strength. The Australian commentator, Paul Dibb, for example, noting China's "old-fashioned attitude to the use of force," points to a number of disturbing possibilities as its strength increases: China's contending with the United States for leadership, "unbridled competition between Asia's great powers," and "major Asian wars two or three decades hence."[4] A Singapore-based analyst Denny Roy suggests that a more powerful China is likely to be "bolder, more demanding, and less inclined to cooperate with other powers in the region."[5]

While such potential threats cannot be altogether discounted, the image of China depicted in these projections appears anachronistic. It is not just that interdependence and globalization are assumed to be of no real consequence, but that the role of regional hegemon (more bluntly, regional bully) is unlikely to satisfy the ambition of a China strong enough to challenge the United States for global leadership (whatever that term may mean two or three decades hence). By then, according to the recently revised estimates of its GNP, China is likely to have the largest economy in the world, and its aspirations to global leadership will probably express themselves in the assumption of a central role in global political and economic institutions. Such a China would inevitably be influential in its region, but that it should seek regional domination to the point of provoking major wars, at the expense of its global influence, appears an unlikely ordering of its priorities.

If a strong China would be a threat, should Western policy refrain from contributing to the strengthening of China? Should it limit trade, and withhold investment? This may be the logical consequence of the preceding thesis, but Roy appears to be alone in recommending it. Fortunately, Western governments, and also the World Bank, appear to be acting on the assumption that interdependence—involving China deeply in the global economy—is the safer bet. To treat China as an enemy today because of fears for the day after tomorrow could very well be a self-fulfilling prophecy. The interdependence hypothesis is not, unfortunately, self-fulfilling, but to act on it improves its chances of realization. More generally, the positive economic prognoses for the region are not simply predictions, but are also prescriptive. What they prescribe—a reasonably open international trade and financial regime—appears likely to enjoy sufficient political support to be maintained in its essentials, even if it is subject to more serious questioning than in the recent past.

Threats to Security

EVEN IF THE long term offers no fundamental reason to expect major regional wars, the short term presents a number of threats to security—longstanding disputes, flashpoints, an arms build-up, and

[3]These issues are discussed in Gerald Segal, *China Changes Shape: Regionalism and Foreign Policy*, Adelphi Paper 287 (London: Brassey's for IISS, 1994).

[4]Paul Dibb, "Asia's Simmering Cauldron Could Soon Boil Over," *The Australian*, November 19, 1993, p. 13.

[5]Denny Roy, "Consequences of China's Economic Growth for Asia-Pacific Security," *Security Dialogue* (June 1993), pp. 181-91.

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fears of nuclear proliferation. An enumeration of potential threats, as in many strategic *tours d'horizon*, is well calculated to generate a sense of alarm, but gives little indication of their seriousness, either in absolute or in relative terms.

We may postulate that the most serious are those which endanger the very existence of a state or regime. (From the point of view of those in power, a threat to a regime may be as serious as a threat to the state itself.) In North Korea, both the state and the regime are precarious, and the attempt to acquire nuclear weapons is best understood as a desperate attempt to shore up the security of both.[6] Here, failing a sudden collapse of the regime, the best that can be hoped for is a process of gradual reform from within, leading eventually to a process of peaceful reunification. The worst is a second Korean war, the initiation of which becomes increasingly irrational as the relative military position of the North declines. At the time of writing, these tensions had been defused by the agreement between the United States and North Korea whereby the latter would cease producing plutonium in return for assistance with its civil nuclear program. Even if this agreement should prove difficult to implement, it offers more promise than the recourse to sanctions which had been canvassed earlier. Sanctions would prolong the regime's siege mentality, precluding gradualist reform, and severely punish the unhappy population.

Neither diplomacy nor sanctions can ensure that a perception of North Korean nuclear weapons, however few in number, will not lead to further proliferation, especially in Northeast Asia. The United States, as the nuclear ally of both Japan and South Korea, is best placed to seek to dissuade both states from the momentous decision to acquire nuclear weapons, but if Japan, in particular, should do so, this need not be seen as undermining the nonproliferation regime. The world was able to live with China's acquiring nuclear weapons at a time when it was perceived as dangerously bellicose. Japan would present no such image, even though its "going nuclear" would undoubtedly create alarm in the region.

China, it has been widely observed, enjoys a greater measure of security against external threats than it has for more than a century, but its regime is sufficiently insecure to be hypersensitive to external pressures on human rights and democratization. Britain's eleventh-hour democratization in Hong Kong, presenting a potential threat to China's internal political balance, ensures that the transfer of sovereignty in 1997 will be more tense than had earlier appeared likely. It could generate a major international issue if outside powers claim a right to a voice in the relations between the Chinese government and the local authorities in Hong Kong.

The future status of Taiwan remains formally disputed. China remains committed to the goal of "one country, two systems;" Taiwan proposes "national unification guidelines" for a "peaceful and democratic process" of reunification, starting with the recognition of Taiwan as an equal political entity. Meanwhile both have encouraged a spectacular growth in trade, travel and investment across the Taiwan Strait, and at the same time the sense of a separate Taiwanese identity is being articulated more strongly. China refuses to renounce the right to use force against territory over which it claims sovereignty, but Taiwan has sufficiently advanced air and naval capabilities to deter an invasion, at least under normal circumstances. The one circumstance which could provoke a crisis would be if Taiwan declared its sovereign independence, but on present indications its leaders are more likely to proceed gradually, avoiding such an inflammatory step.[7]

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[6]See, e.g., Andrew Mack, "The Nuclear Crisis on the Korean Peninsula," *Asian Survey* (April 1993).

[7]Recent developments in Taiwan are discussed in Gary Klintworth (ed.), *Taiwan in the Asia-Pacific in the 1990s* (St. Leonards: Allen & Unwin Australia, 1994).

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After Korea, the Spratly Islands are most widely referred to as a flashpoint, no doubt because of the prospect of major offshore oil resources in their vicinity. China used force here against Vietnam in 1988, claims sovereignty over the whole of the South China Sea today, and is undertaking a substantial naval build-up. Indonesia has sponsored several informal "workshops" in an attempt to secure practical agreements on resource exploration, setting aside the competing territorial claims—of Malaysia, the Philippines, Brunei and Taiwan, as well as China and Vietnam. China's signals are ambiguous: while endorsing the principles of joint development and a negotiated settlement, it so far rejects formal negotiations. The issue has come to represent a test case for China's relations with Southeast Asia, and the political cost of any attempt to enforce its claims to sovereignty would be very significant. It is doubtful whether exploration and oil drilling could proceed satisfactorily except on an internationally agreed basis.

In Cambodia, the initial promise of the UN-sponsored settlement and the high level of participation in the ensuing election have been overshadowed by the weakness of the state, the instability and corruption of its politics and the revival of the Khmer Rouge's threat to the regime. If the internal settlement unravels, there may be a return to conditions which prompted outside intervention and rivalry, thereby rekindling animosities between China and Vietnam, once again involving ASEAN, and quite possibly posing greater threats to its cohesion than the protracted Cambodian conflict through the 1980s.

The foregoing cases do not exhaust the list of potential security threats, but they are the most prominent. They are not the kind of issues which tend to generate great wars. Perhaps the most adverse pattern that can be discerned in the shadows cast by them, should they be mishandled, is a general alignment of the states of the region against China—a new kind of cold war which could indeed negate the positive economic prognoses sketched earlier. But this would presuppose rather gross and persistent diplomatic misjudgment on all sides.

For some analysts the most alarming trend is the regional arms build-up. Contrary to developments in the rest of the world since the ending of the Cold War, arms expenditure is increasing, and the emphasis is no longer on internal security but on air and naval forces—that is, power projection capabilities. In particular China, after reducing its arms spending in the early years of the economic reforms, has increased it since 1989, though only marginally in real terms.[8] There are concerns that if others respond in kind, the region will be closer to a genuine competitive arms race, and this in turn could conceivably create pressures for preemptive strikes if, at some time in the future, political tensions were to increase.

Dangers of this kind appear remote. The regional arms build-up needs to be seen in terms of sub-regions and special cases such as the two Koreas, clearly the most heavily armed states in the region, relative to GNP. Taiwan's heavy expenditure on advanced weaponry also has its obvious explanation in its need to deter invasion; Japan, partly due to American prompting, has built up a formidable capacity to defend its immediate environment. The increase in China's military outlays since 1989 no doubt reflects the increased influence of the military, but also

[8]It is often claimed that China's defense expenditure has increased by 60 percent since 1989, but when inflation is taken into account this may be only of the order of 3 percent annually (Gary Klintworth and Desmond Ball, "China's Arms Buildup and Regional Security," in Stuart Harris and Gary Klintworth (eds.), *China as a Great Power in the Asia-Pacific* (Melbourne: Longman Cheshire, forthcoming). On the other hand, it is generally acknowledged that the actual level of defense spending is much higher than the published budget figures show.

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the high cost of modernizing China's largely obsolescent forces, especially after the perceived lessons of the Gulf War on the advantages of high technology. In Southeast Asia, starting from a lower level, most states are similarly engaged in modernizing and upgrading their armed forces and in acquiring more effective maritime capabilities, both in order to protect their exclusive economic zones and as a hedge against a further withdrawal of the American presence. This does not amount to a competitive arms race, but the members of ASEAN can be seen as countering the image of a power vacuum, at least in some measure, and to this extent enhancing overall regional stability. We may conclude, then, that with the possible exception of Korea, the various arms build-ups in the region have limited rationales, and that their significance should not be over-dramatized.

Regional Institutions

IT IS TRUE that multilateral institutions at the governmental level have been slow to emerge along the Pacific Rim and that their significance will not be clear for some time, but this is not the whole story. Non-governmental economic institutions have existed since the late 1960s, and since the late 1980s there has been a proliferation of institutions engaging in a security dialogue. "Track two" diplomacy—bringing together civilian government officials "in their private capacity" with non-governmental elites (business, military and/or academic)—has become the characteristic format of the various dialogues, some involving a small number of parties, some the Asia-Pacific region as it is currently understood (East Asia, North America and Australasia), and a few extending even more broadly to include states from South Asia or Latin America.

Indeed, the thickening acronym soup of regional organizations is beginning to rival that of Europe. On the economic front, there are PAFTAD (conference on Pacific Trade and Economic Development), PBEC (Pacific Economic Basin Council), and PECC (Pacific Economic Cooperation Conference, and later Council), which have collectively provided a basis for the formation of the intergovernmental body APEC (Asia Pacific Economic Cooperation) in 1989. Thus far APEC has been a forum for high-level political discussions (including, importantly, both China and Taiwan), not an institution with specific functions and bureaucratic structures.[9] The most contentious issue with respect to economic institutions has been Malaysia's proposal to establish an East Asian Economic Caucus, a grouping which would exclude APEC's North American and Australasian members. It is now expected to be a sub-grouping within APEC.

In the security field, the pattern has been similar, with "track two" initiatives like the Asia-Pacific Roundtable, which brings together several hundred officials and non-governmental experts for wide-ranging discussions, and the Council for Security Cooperation in the Asia-Pacific (CSCAP), an association of non-governmental institutions and think-tanks, preparing the way for intergovernmental institutions. This year has seen the first meeting of the Asian Regional Forum, associated with the ASEAN Post-Ministerial Conference (at which the ASEAN governments traditionally meet with their principal trading partners and certain other states from the region). In mid-1993 there were, according to one listing which did not claim to be exhaustive, at least fifteen lesser ongoing, multi-country, trans-Pacific programs for discussion of security issues.

ASEAN has played a key role in these developments. Through acting together in a cohesive diplomatic association, a group of smaller or less developed states has ensured not merely the safeguarding of its members' special interests but a major voice in institution-building. Although ostensibly not con-

[9]Taiwan's membership is restricted to the extent that it does not participate at head-of-government level.

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cerned with security issues, ASEAN can point to a record of defusing internal disputes and effective diplomacy on regional security matters, such as Cambodia, which amounts to a substantial contribution to security in the broader sense. Its characteristic *modus operandi* has been low-key diplomacy and the promotion of cooperation through informal understandings, not formal institution-building.

This "Asian" approach tends to be misunderstood by Western commentators, leading some to underestimate the significance of existing institutions and to impatience with the lack of institutional development. Both in the economic and security fields a certain tension can be observed between a Western preference for specific goals, programs and proposals, sometimes ambitious in scope such as a program for trade liberalization or an array of arms control proposals—and an Asian preference for a process of political familiarization and confidence-building.[10] In institutions that are overwhelmingly Asian in their membership, Western impatience for concrete agreements at this early stage is misplaced.

There are, however, other grounds for concern over the manner in which the process of regional institutional cooperation is developing. It is not only that, to an even greater extent than in Europe, the process is elite-driven, with little societal backing, but the elites themselves consist of two rather self-contained specialist professions—economists and strategic analysts—each with well-defined but narrow agendas: one dominated by trade and market liberalization, the other by what has been termed "Strategic Studies USA." It may well be the case that regional cooperation in an area so diverse as the Asia-Pacific may require the acceptance of certain orthodoxies, and that at the present time the natural source for these are networks of policy experts, sometimes more grandly termed "epistemic communities." But are these the right orthodoxies, and are they sufficient?

The agendas of both groups are notable for their omissions: market liberalization is emphasized, but issues such as employment, the adequacy of infrastructure, or the social and environmental consequences of rapid economic change are left to themselves, or to individual states. Similarly, while the Council for Security and Cooperation in the Asia-Pacific is to address complex issues such as maritime cooperation, the larger political reasons for conflict and insecurity, or the tensions which brought U.S. relations with both China and Japan near to crisis earlier in 1994, are not on the agenda.

More generally, what is lacking is any sense of the broader goals of policy, whether for the major bilateral relationships or for the Pacific community as a whole. The driving force behind the European Community/Union was not just the freeing up of trade, and certainly not arms control, but rather passionately held ideas. It involved a political vision—first in the minds of Jean Monnet and his associates, later a rather different vision in the mind of Charles de Gaulle, and more recently a revival, or according to some, a distortion of the original vision by Jacques Delors. This dimension—and of course it would have to take quite a different form—has been lacking in the Asia-Pacific context.

A Clash of Civilizations?

THIS LACK RAISES fundamental questions—not least the question whether the idea of an Asia-Pacific region corresponds to any kind of reality. Is the problem that, beneath the occasional rhetorical flourish, there is a sense of a yawning chasm? Could Huntington be right, that the future will see a clash between fundamentally incompatible cultures? Is this the basic reality underlying the

[10]These tensions are discussed in Pauline Kerr, "Security Dialogue in the Asia-Pacific," in a forthcoming issue of *Pacific Review*.

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tensions between the United States and Japan, or China? Despite the sound and fury of the accompanying polemic, there is much that speaks against this reading of the situation.

The polemic itself has been notable for the vigorous criticisms of the West, and more specifically the United States, by Singaporean leaders: the war of words over corporal punishment of an American youth convicted of vandalism, forthright criticisms of Western democracy by elder statesman Lee Kwan Yew, and critical articles by Singaporean scholar-diplomats in American policy journals.[11] While the Chinese base their stand on human rights on the defense of sovereignty, the Singaporeans have mounted a sophisticated case for Confucian authoritarianism. This can be read as an outright rejection of Western values, a confirmation of the pessimistic view that, as East Asia gains in strength and self-confidence, cultural incompatibilities will become clearer and any notion of an Asia-Pacific community will be shown to be hollow.

Seen in the context of changes in East Asian societies, however, the polemic is open to a quite different reading. Western individualist values have indeed a strong appeal, but the timing and manner of their acceptance in societies governed by more communal values should be left to those societies to determine. Above all, the kind of pressure which the United States was threatening to impose on China through linking human rights with Most Favored Nation status was inadmissible because, whether deliberately or not, it endangered political order in China—a threat not only to development but to the overall level of human rights in that country. It also evoked memories of Western claims of cultural superiority, and when these were backed by what was perceived as crude pressure, the sharpness of the regional reaction is not surprising.

Even at its most polemical, however, a debate about human rights and fundamental principles has a certain reassuring quality, given the infinitely more dangerous forms that international conflict can take. The disputants are, by and large, speaking the same language. The situation is thus very different from the ideological conflict in the more serious phase of the Cold War, when there was mutual incomprehension. Now, the Singaporean authors acknowledge the positive aspects of Western values before proceeding to their denunciations of the negative.

A more clearly positive view of Western values is taken in *Towards a New Asia*, a report of the Commission for a New Asia, a group of influential policy advisers and elder statesmen from East and South Asia, convened by Noordin Sopiee, Director General of the Institute of Strategic and International Studies, Malaysia (1994). It sets out a vision of Asia in the year 2020, and is to be followed by further reports on strategies for their implementation. Viewed through Western eyes, the principles read as a synthesis of values which have come to be associated with recent Asian dynamism plus selected Western values. There is an emphatic rejection of extremism ('often the child of sincerity'), and an insistence on balance.

The report sets out twenty-eight "most important fundamental human

[11]An early statement of this approach was Kishore Mahbubani, "The West and the Rest", *The National Interest* (Summer 1992); see also, by the same author, "The United States: 'Go East, Young Man'," *The Washington Quarterly* (Spring 1994). For critical discussion, see Eric Jones, "Asia's Fate: A Response to the Singapore School," *The National Interest* (Spring 1994); Denny Roy, "Singapore, China and the 'Soft Authoritarian' Challenge," *Asian Survey* (March 1994).

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rights," only one of which is in any way contentious—"the right to order and freedom from anarchy and chaos." Economic and social rights receive as much emphasis as civil and political rights. The same general approach informs the discussion of political democracy: "Man must not be made to serve democracy. Democracy must be made to serve man." While democracy is endorsed as a goal, the tone of the endorsement recalls E.M. Forster's *Two Cheers for Democracy*.

Three points here are noteworthy. First, and allowing as the authors do for all the limitations of a statement of aspirations, it is striking that at a time when the lack of political vision is so evident in the West, here is a strong statement of a vision by respected figures from throughout the region. Second, if nations are "imagined communities," how much more so is "Asia." Yet if the regional institutions noted earlier are to prosper there needs to be an underlying sense of a wider community; the report can be seen as part of the process of constructing such an identity. This incipient identity, however, is "Asian," not "Pacific;" perhaps the idea of a Pacific community is destined to remain as tenuous as that of its Atlantic counterpart. And third, while it is *distinguished* quite sharply from the West, the "New Asia" conceived by the authors is not defined in *opposition* to the West, nor is it distinctively Confucian or Islamic—nor, for that matter, Indian or Javanese. There is no predestined clash of civilizations: if anything, the authors look to cultural blending to defuse clashes among states.

Half Empty or Half Full?

SURVEYING THE developments under way in the region, there are grounds for cautious optimism. Buzan and Segal's Hobbesian prognosis cannot be conclusively refuted, but its neglect of many of these developments detracts from its credibility. The buoyant confidence which one senses in the region stands in contrast to the malaise which is so evident in most other parts of the world. The task of constructing a regional security community might indeed appear formidable, but to allow the present favorable conjuncture to degenerate into major wars fought with the weapons of the twenty-first century would signify political and diplomatic mismanagement of a spectacularly high order. The outcome will depend, in the last analysis, on the political and diplomatic skills of the region's decision-makers, and experience suggests that these are very considerable.

Rather more concern is in order, however, over the nature of the advice which they are likely to receive from the existing policy networks. Despite all the talk of a broader concept of security, it is not clear that the security dialogue is capable of addressing the most serious issues confronting the region. Military security in the narrow sense still claims disproportionate attention, whereas it is likely that the decisions of greatest consequence will be in the broader economic and political spheres, and quite possible that non-decisions concerning the environment will prove most consequential of all. Pessimists would do well to redirect their attention; in all probability, they are asking the wrong questions. □

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The Panic Gap

Reactions to North Korea's Bomb

James Fallows

EVERYONE KNOWS THAT Americans should pay more attention to events outside their country's borders, especially now that we live in the Interdependent Age. But maybe the reverse is true. Maybe the old, clubby foreign policy establishment had it right when trying to conduct foreign policy out of the public view.

That, at least, was my working hypothesis after traveling to Seoul this summer, during the showdown over North Korea's nuclear ambitions. The more attention the issue received in the U.S. press, the closer to true disaster the whole episode moved. It was only when mainstream Americans—and, even more, the commentators who hector them on TV programs and the op-ed pages—were distracted by other questions that the serious negotiation could begin. Apparently no one has figured out how to interest the American public in international trends without exaggerating, oversimplifying, or warping the reality of events to fit domestic U.S. preoccupations of the moment.

Is this claim itself an exaggeration? Consider the Korean case:

South Korea has plenty of political and economic challenges to cope with in the long run. At the moment the rise of the Japanese yen gives Korean exporters like Hyundai and Daewoo a price advantage over Sony and Matsushita, but over the last decade, while the yen has more than doubled in value, Korea has actually lost technological ground, relative to Japan. (The explanation seems to lie in Japan's much higher investment levels, and the way its companies have used the strong yen to establish a manufacturing base across Southeast Asia.) While much of East Asia seems to conform to the "Singapore model," combining economic prosperity with considerable social control, Korean society often appears to be on the verge of flying apart. The unions have been so aggressive in pressing wage demands—and so successful—that wages have in many recent years risen twice as fast as productivity has. Korea's overall trade surplus climbed steadily during the bad old days of military rule before 1987, but then plummeted with the coming of civilian government. In the 1990s Korea has often run trade deficits, which no matter what economic theorists might say is seen as a disaster in Korea. Conspicuous consumption is on the rise so fast that the government has launched periodic austerity campaigns, designed to crack down on such excesses as imported French brandy or American Lincoln cars. President Kim Young Sam now leads the first truly civilian-elected government ever to rule in Korea, but it is not certain that a stable party structure has taken shape.

During this summer, however, all of these long-term problems were shoved aside by a more fundamental and immediate-seeming concern: that South Korea might be blown up by a North Korean nuclear bomb. Since early 1993, the always-difficult regime of Kim Il Sung had behaved in ways fully consistent with a desire to

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produce nuclear weapons and conceal them from international scrutiny. In March 1993, North Korea announced that it would withdraw from the Non-Proliferation Treaty. Through the rest of the year it more and more flagrantly ignored the wishes of the International Atomic Energy Agency, particularly for IAEA inspections of North Korea's nuclear-power plants. Outside observers assumed that these facilities, especially at Yongbyon, were producing plutonium that in turn could be used for bombs. By the end of 1993, U.S. intelligence agencies were leaking their belief that North Korea might already have produced one or two crude bombs.

Through early 1994, the Clinton administration made menacing comments about the "unacceptability" of a North Korean nuclear force. In the early spring President Clinton made a show-the-flag gesture of sending Patriot missiles to South Korea. (The chances that these would actually spare the South from nuclear destruction were remote, given the Patriot's spotty performance during the Gulf war and the several-month delay before they would be installed and operational.)

The North Koreans were unbowed, and by the late spring the moment of truth had arrived—at least in the view of many U.S. politicians and commentators. Senator John McCain of Arizona, a Republican and one-time POW in Vietnam who has generally been cautious in supporting military engagements, recommended preemptive air strikes against North Korea's nuclear strikes. Brent Scowcroft, George Bush's National Security Advisor, wrote an op-ed piece also endorsing preemptive strikes. The commentator Charles Krauthammer published a column titled "Get Ready for War Now" in *The Washington Post*. William Safire took the same approach; the sub-headline on his column was, "Straight War Talk is Needed Now." "As with some of the most insidious forms of cancer, what we are witnessing is not a cure but a remission," Henry Kissinger wrote just after Jimmy Carter met Kim Il Sung in Pyongyang and seemed to arrange a stop-gap compromise. The title of the column was, "No Compromise, But A Rollback," and it too ended with the sober advice that the U.S. must be prepared to attack.

Such was the mood in the United States as of mid-June, 1994—before Kim Il Sung died in early July, before the ensuing turmoil in North Korea, before the package deal arranged by U.S. and North Korean negotiators in October that, for now, has ended the showdown.

Americans were thinking and hearing a lot about Korea in those days. The topic dominated the news columns, the op-ed pages, and the endless political chat shows. Politicians and commentators felt compelled to take sides—and then to rebut, challenge, and belittle those on the opposite side. Relatively few of these people had been to Korea; almost none could have named a member of the North Korean government apart from Kim Il Sung and his son Kim Jong Il, or have explained where Yongbyon was relative either to Seoul or Pyongyang. Yet these American arguments proceeded with the tone of absolute certainty that typifies talk-show discourse these days. The whole spectacle, as viewed from the Korean peninsula, was perfectly bizarre.

There was a hint of this oddity in several U.S. newspaper stories, which pointed out that the closer you got to Ground Zero of the North Korea nuclear threat, the less panicked the mood became. While Americans were discussing the timing and collateral damage of preemptive strike, life was humming along in Seoul as it had for several years. The Institute of International Economics in Seoul had hired a foreign editor to come supervise an English-language edition of the institute's reports. The editor called at the last moment, in May, to say he couldn't take the job because the danger was too great. Residents of Seoul told me that relatives living overseas—in Los Angeles, Vancouver, New York—were calling to ask whether at least the children could be sent out of Korea, to a safe foreign haven, so some part of the family would survive the war that, TV assured them, was about to begin.

A panic did eventually overtake Seoul, and people rushed to the stores in early June to buy canned goods and dry noodles to sustain them in their bomb shelters. But that mood was

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short-lived, and it was almost totally in reaction to the dire sounds coming out of the United States.

The explanation for this difference in tone could not have been that South Korea was "soft" toward North Korea in any conventional sense. Yes, South Korean radicals and student-activists had long urged quick unification with the North. (They typically saw the imperialistic presence of U.S. forces as the only obstacle to this desirable goal.) Discussions among politicians, scholars, and journalists in South Korea had, since the 1980s, begun from the premise that reunification was inevitable once the North Korean regime collapsed. The question was when and under what terms. But the tone of South Korean life had been shaped for decades by the reality (and proximity!) of the North Korean threat. Korea's government bureaucracy is still affected by the loss of more than a dozen senior, influential officials, all of whom were blown up by a North Korean terrorist in Rangoon in 1983.[1] Until the time of the 1988 Olympics in Korea, life in Seoul was interrupted once a month for air-raid defense drills. The De-Militarized Zone (DMZ) itself, less than an hour's drive from the capital, is a kind of shrine to the unpredictability of the North Korean regime. Visitors can stroll through the tunnels that North Koreans have attempted to blast through the rock under the DMZ. Murals show the way that North Korean soldiers might storm through the tunnels to invade. Guides say, "These are the tunnels we have found," and ask, "How many more might there be?"

Nor was there a huge difference between South Korea and the United States when it came to assessing North Korea's desire to build a bomb. "I ask foreign journalists if they know when North Korea began its long effort to build nuclear weapons," Kim Chang Soon, of the Institute for North Korean Studies, told me in Seoul in June. He seemed crestfallen when I replied, "Oh, the mid-1950s?" "The *exact* date is June 27, 1955, at a conference on nuclear energy in Moscow," he informed me, as the lead-in to a long chronology of how North Korea had worked with the Soviets and Chinese to acquire the technology they needed. "We have always known that they want this," he concluded. Of the several dozen officials I interviewed in Seoul, not one suggested the slightest doubt that North Korea was in fact trying hard to build nuclear weapons.

A more plausible and substantive reason for the panic gap between the U.S. and South Korea involves non-proliferation policy. From the U.S. government's point of view, a North Korean bomb is ominous not simply because of what it might do to South Korea (or Japan) but for what it would mean for the worldwide fight against nuclear proliferation. If the North Koreans, with impunity, defied international rules to build a bomb, other nations would be encouraged—and terrorists or trouble-makers would have more bombs to buy. (This assumes that for some reason they could not find the bombs they wanted among the tens of thousands floating around the former Soviet Union.) For American policymakers, resisting proliferation was at least as important as defending South Korea; for South Koreans, not surprisingly, saving themselves came first.

Indeed, in a quiet way many people in South Korea actually resisted the anti-proliferation agenda. As eventual reunification came to seem more likely than nuclear devastation from across the DMZ, many South Koreans realized that a "North Korean bomb" would someday be a "Korean bomb." A recent best-selling book in South Korea argues explicitly that a unified Korea should have nuclear weapons, in order to stand up to China and Japan. One evening in late June I was discussing the nuclear problem with two former Korean diplomats who had served in the United States and England. They spoke entirely in English except for one brief exchange in Korean, which I do not understand. Later I asked a translator, who had also been

[1]Mark L. Clifford, of the *Far Eastern Economic Review*, discusses the impact of this episode, and many other aspects of modern Korea, in his excellent new book *Troubled Tiger: Businessmen, Bureaucrats, and Generals in South Korea* (New York: Sharpe M.E., Inc., 1994).

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present, what they had discussed. "That was when they said both Koreas really need nuclear weapons to survive," the translator, torn between professionalism and a sense that this answer might cause problems, eventually replied.

Yet there was a difference in the American and South Korean world views that went beyond proliferation policy. In three ways the North Korean situation seemed starkly different when viewed from Seoul rather than from Washington or New York.

The first difference concerned the degree of *certainty* about how dire the situation was. From the South Korean perspective, North Korea's truculence in 1993 and early 1994 merely underscored what had been apparent for forty years: that it was doing everything possible to develop a nuclear force. But South Korean officials argued that there was little hard evidence that North Korea had moved dramatically closer to that goal. "At the most they have one bomb," a Korean diplomat told me. "We know they have never tested a bomb." On the evidence available, most in the South Korean government thought that the situation was "grave but not urgent." North Korea's nuclear desires were a major problem—but not a new one, and not one demanding a now-or-never response. "For forty years the North Korean threat has been there," a former Korean ambassador told me one evening at dinner. "At any point in that period North Korea could have destroyed Seoul if it wanted, with or without nuclear weapons. We have had to assess this problem for years." The nuclear problem would become urgent, in this view, if and when North Korea tested its first bomb (an event that U.S. monitoring equipment in South Korea would instantly detect).

This led to the second difference, one of perceived *urgency*. American op-ed columns in early 1994 reminded us that the doomsday clock was ticking away. With each passing week, North Korea moved that much closer to its long-sought status as a nuclear power, and the United States (and South Korea) had that much less time to act. The word "appeasement" appeared more and more often on the op-ed page. Together with allusions to Adolf Hitler and Saddam Hussein, it implied that if the Clinton administration shied from forcing the issue today, the consequences would be even worse tomorrow.

Even the hardest-line anti-communists in Seoul had the opposite impression: that *time was on their side*. "No one can solve the nuclear problem with North Korea as long as Kim Il Sung is alive," Kim Dae Joong, the very hard-line editor of the newspaper *Chosun Ilbo*, told me two weeks before Kim Il Sung actually died. (There was at that time every reason to think that the Great Leader might remain in control for years.) "We can never go into the living room of North Korea and look everywhere. They will never give up their nuclear dreams under pressure from other countries. But when Kim Il Sung dies, the new government will need money and cooperation. They will come out and say, let's bargain. It will happen in five years." In the meantime, Kim Dae Joong said, the only option was "just wait"—with adequate troops along the DMZ and a stern U.S. warning that any military *action* would bring instant and overwhelming response.

"Time *is* on our side," Chang Jae Lee, of the Korean Institute of International Economic Policy, said in early July. "No one really believes that North Korea will attack, since they could have done it at any time. We know they are not 'reasonable' people, but most of us don't regard them as that crazy. Kim Il Sung has a very negative image in Korea but people think that at least he cares about his own survival and his family. If he attacks it is only if he concludes there is no other way out." The more that the Americans urged immediate action, the more the Koreans asked, "What's the rush?"

The third disagreement concerned the best negotiating strategy toward Kim Il Sung. Most simply put, the difference was *hard versus soft*. American discussion took it for granted that the only possible error in negotiating strategy would be wishy-washiness. Since the stakes were high, the United States could not give an inch. Many Koreans said, on the contrary, that precisely because the issue was so important it need-

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ed to be handled as intelligently as possible, which did not mean pushing Kim Il Sung into a corner. The risk of being too weak was that North Korea would get away with building its bombs. But there was also a risk in seeming too threatening, many South Koreans said; the risk was that Kim Il Sung would launch his own preemptive strike, exposing his own country to devastation but along the way obliterating what had taken South Korea forty years to build. Both risks had to be borne in mind. One former South Korean diplomat said he had met Brent Scowcroft just after reading Scowcroft's article endorsing preemptive strikes. "I asked whether Americans had thought about the effects of this on the sixty million people living on the peninsula. I had the feeling that it was an afterthought."

Significantly, the one American who most often emphasized the dual risks was closer to the scene than most politicians and columnists. This was the U.S. ambassador to Korea, James Laney. My discussion with him in June in Seoul was, like most of his other meetings with journalists, conducted on a "background" basis that prevents me from recounting its details. But Ambassador Laney made his views so widely known that they appeared in many papers (most authoritatively in *The Wall Street Journal*, in an article by Stephen Glain on August 9, 1994, which I will use as an on-the-record source here).

The ambassador was known to feel that politicians and columnists in Washington were talking each other into a brink-of-war mood for reasons that had little to do with Korean realities. North Korea's nuclear program was a "threat to the world" that should be "pulled out by its roots," Laney was quoted as saying in *The Wall Street Journal*. But he added, "It's important to know the devastation that another Korean war would wreak upon the peninsula, and to move with great circumspection." According to widespread reports, Ambassador Laney contacted General Gary E. Luck, commander-in-chief of U.S. and Korean forces on the peninsula, to ask where the war fever was originating. General Luck is widely reported to have asked, "Mr. Ambassador, did you order this buildup? Because I didn't."

When two leading hard-liners who had helped engineer a buildup, Republican Senators McCain and Phil Gramm, came to Korea, Laney is said to have reminded them that North Korea still had never tested a nuclear bomb. This came as news to the senators. Laney was (reportedly!) astonished that war talk could have gone so far in ignorance of this basic fact.

Robert A. Manning, who served as a consultant to the Office of the Secretary of Defense during the Reagan administration, pointed out that several other basic facts were omitted from most of the American discourse:

> The likelihood that we do not know where the necessary targets are, the high probability that...a preemptive strike would spew radioactive fallout all over Northeast Asia and in any case trigger a North Korean military response, and the reluctance of South Korea, Japan, and China to pursue such a course all suggest that the risks of a preemptive strike outweigh the benefits.

These views were published in a quasi-governmental publication, *The Korean Journal of National Unification*—not *The Washington Post* or *The New York Times*.

What accounted for the difference in perception? One possibility, of course, is that the Americans were wiser, braver, and more clear-headed than were the Koreans, who lost sight of the big picture because of their petty local concerns. But it seemed to me that it was actually the Americans who were wrapped up in petty local issues. The debate over North Korea had less to do with Kim Il Sung, Kim Jong Il, Kim Young Sam, or the many other Kims than with purely American concerns about the character of the Clinton administration and of America itself.

An article by Andrew Sullivan of *The New Republic*, published in *The Times* of London this April, perfectly illustrated this mindset. Its argument was that the U.S. has gone in wholesale for appeasement, most dramatically in Bosnia. North Korea mattered only as a case study of this larger point. ("In North Korea, the sabre-rattling has been almost always accompanied by an obvious desire to risk nothing.") By extension Clinton

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would have been less craven and Chamberlain-ish, more manly and admirably Thatcher-like, if he had lowered the boom on North Korea—whether or not that made the slightest tactical, strategic, or moral sense.

In his article for the *Korean Journal of National Unification*, Robert A. Manning described such arguments as part of a "political hothouse atmosphere, one in which facts—in this case with a disturbingly narrow information base to begin with—are of decreasing relevance." American politicians and commentators were using North Korea as a mere prop for "political posturing." "Calls grow louder for preemptive action... along with urge for an instant *dénouement*.":

> The history of North Korean international behavior suggests that when squeezed into a corner it will not make concessions but will lash out....If there is any hope of a diplomatic solution, its likelihood is increased when Pyongyang's concerns and legitimate interests are taken seriously.

This sounds weak, horrible and appeasing—but it *turned out to be right*. Despite various complaints about the deal struck in October between North Korea and the United States (Senator McCain reappeared to call it, officially, "appeasement"), it was an outcome that most Americans would have welcomed a year earlier. North Korea agreed, in principle, to dismantle its system for reprocessing nuclear fuel, which was the basis of its nuclear threat.[2] In exchange, North Korea will get financial and technical help in building two new reactors, at a potential cost of as much as $8 billion. But much of the cost will be borne by South Korea and Japan, and a military strike would have brought costs of its own. Only people who wanted a showdown for its own sake, as a demonstration of toughness and a willingness to "risk" something, can regret the outcome.

And why was a deal possible at all? Thanks go most of all to Kim Il Sung, who by dying at just the right moment broke the negotiating log-jam. Jimmy Carter also played an important part, by delaying the showdown for the two weeks it took Kim Il Sung to die. But credit also goes to O.J. Simpson. Thanks to him, America got bored with Korea—and suddenly there was time and space to work out a deal.

Through April, May, and early June, Korea held the featured role in America's information machine. A few months earlier, Rwanda had briefly occupied this position. A few months later, Haiti would. Whatever subject was momentarily in the limelight was analyzed and sized-up around the clock. Op-ed pieces in the morning, talk shows late at night, Rush Limbaugh in between—all combined to create the impression that something had to happen *right now* to resolve the issue. Once an issue began to drift from this central position, of course, it was no longer quite so urgent to do anything right away. (Four years ago, America could barely stand the idea of the vicious Saddam Hussein in power. Now we rise each morning and go to bed each night indifferent to his continued presence on the throne.)

Sooner or later North Korea would have become boring in any case, but the O.J. Simpson trial ensured that it would be sooner. "You could *feel* the weight of CNN come off us then," a Korean diplomat told me in Seoul (as I have also recounted in *The Atlantic Monthly*). The issue no longer had to be solved immediately—and over the next few months, slowly, without daily analysis and the need for muscle-flexing, it was solved. □

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[2]As Jessica Mathews wrote in October in *The Washington Post*, "They have agreed to freeze and ultimately dismantle the reprocessing plant, present and planned reactors and the fuel-fabrication plant: all of their weapons-related facilities. They have agreed to give up their existing fuel rods. They have agreed to satisfy the International Atomic Energy Agency about the plutonium diverted in the past and to put it under safeguards. They have agreed to special inspections that they had earlier absolutely rejected. In short, they have agreed to give up a nuclear-weapons capability—something no country but South Africa has done before. They may renege, but for now they have agreed."

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Asia's Rising Middle Class

—*Not a Force for Change*

David Martin Jones

IN A RECENT issue of *The National Interest*, Eric Jones cast a skeptical eye over the Singapore school of authoritarian rule. Concluding his timely critique, Jones reassures those of a liberal disposition that the creation of a new middle class will ultimately transform the prevailing social and political reality of East Asia. "Some elements of that class," Jones argues, "start to demand those effete and non-material things which are associated...with Western lifestyles and philosophies. The items include political participation, multi-party politics, an end to corruption, a freer press, environmental clean-up. Already these things and others can be seen emerging on the East Asian scene."

Having earlier observed that the East Asian Miracle occurs within "quite another ethic," it is perhaps a little surprising to find Professor Jones endorsing this commonplace of modernization theory. In this view, readily familiar to readers of *The Economist*, economic modernization creates an irresistible pressure for political liberalization. Initially, authoritarian rule offers the necessary stability for economic growth. However, as a fully developed modernity approaches, an increasingly redundant authoritarianism withers away. The invisible hand guiding this change is a self-confident, and increasingly articulate middle class. In other words, the middle class, itself the frankensteinian creation of the Asian developmental state, constitutes its liberal democratic nemesis. But does it?

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The Character of the New Bourgeoisie

ASSESSING THE EAST Asian Miracle, the World Bank recently reported that the various Asian dragon and tiger economies that inhabit the lexical jungle of developmental studies uniquely combine "rapid, sustained growth with highly equal income distributions." The most significant social product of the process was a materialistic, upwardly mobile and highly urbanized middle class.

This phenomenon owes nothing to constitutional democracy and little to neoclassical economic policy. The virtuous rule of one man or one party, mediated by an elite cadre of highly qualified technocrats, guided this socio-economic transformation. The model is one of planned development, what Singapore's Lee Kuan Yew refers to as "a step-by-step approach" where no aspect of social or political life is left to chance. Indeed, successful planning ultimately justified the rule of the autocratic generals or quasi-Leninist parties that governed post-colonial Korea, Taiwan, Singapore, Indonesia, and Malaysia.

This meticulously planned development, moreover, was supplemented ideologically by

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selectively re-invented "Asian values" in order to maintain the political stability central to export-led growth. These values, inculcated overtly in state education programs and mass media campaigns, emphasize community rather than autonomy, and conformity to rational rule rather than tolerance of pluralistic interests. It is claimed that specifically Asian practices of legalistic bureaucracy—Confucian hierarchy, harmonious balance, *gotong royong* (cooperation), and non-contentious consensus building in general—explain both Pacific Asian economic dynamism and social order.

It is, moreover, the middle classes in these nation-building states that are most exposed to these values, both in their state education and in their subsequent careers. Indeed, it is the ruling party in its various guises as government employer, political machine, and entrepreneur that remains the primary source of middle class employment in contemporary South Korea, Taiwan, and Singapore. This anxious pursuit of state dependency is even more evident in the moderately Islamized polities of Malaysia and Indonesia. In Malaysia, for instance, the ethnic Malay or *bumiputera* middle class has flourished under the affirmative action policy promoted since 1971 by the ruling United Malay National Organization (UMNO)-dominated coalition. The state bureaucracy or businesses with UMNO links are the primary sources of Malay middle class employment. UMNO, in the view of the World Bank, provides "political crutches" for the significantly unimaginative bumiputera entrepreneurs.[1] Analogously, in Indonesia the middle class has emerged within the protective milieu of a corporatist state.

The Asian middle class that evolved under technocratic guidance is, then, effectively in its thrall. Exposure to state education and employment in the multifarious branches of the bureaucracy inures the Asian bourgeoisie to narrow specialism, group conformity, a lack of interest in wider political issues, and respect for their own and other's expert knowledge. Specialization and deference, combined with the neurotic joys of group conformity, promote social practices that have significantly illiberal political implications.

In Singapore, these factors, concentrated and exacerbated by the claustrophobic character of life in the city without a soul, favor a middle class identity composed of political indifference mixed with high anxiety. Its most significant manifestation is the local cultural practice of *kiasuism*. *Kiasu*, from the Hokkien "scared to lose," maintains that "If you are not one up you are one down." It condones otherwise anti-social activity, provided the progenitor succeeds in achieving collectively desired but scarce social goods whilst maintaining conformist anonymity. The arriviste selfishness central to kiasu behavior stems not from self-confidence but its absence, which makes fear of failure the dominant concern in a competitive and over-regulated society. The government-controlled media is notably ambivalent in its response to displays of Singaporean kiasuism. In fact, the middle class angst that such behavior represents, amplified by a migrant heritage, actively facilitates the ruling People's Action Party's (PAP) claim to rational, managerial omnicompetence.

The small size of the city-state and the capacity of its mandarins to control every aspect of the island's development crystallize in a particularly vivid way aspects of Asian behavior less obviously apparent in the aspiring bourgeoisie of Seoul, Taipei, Kuala Lumpur, and Jakarta. Nevertheless we find the unconfident burghers of Taipei notably inarticulate, politically pragmatic, and with an overriding interest in preserving the status quo. As F.C. Wang, chairman of Formosa Plastics observes, "When you have money

[1]Ismail Muhd Salleh, and Saha Dhevan Moyanathan, *The Lessons of East Asia: Malaysia Growth, Equity, and Structural Transformation*. (Washington, D.C.: The World Bank, 1993), p. 26.

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you need stability." In South Korea, meanwhile, continuing political fragility reflects a middle class culture whose defining feature is the continuing search for order, certainty, and security—a social fact that casts doubt on the view that its resistance to the military autocrat Chun Doo Hwan in 1987 announced the arrival of a new era of liberal democracy. For, somewhat surreally, in June 1987 the Korean middle class took to the streets chanting the decidedly unrevolutionary slogan, "Order."

Again in Malaysia Professor Mahadzir Mat Kir observes that, "The nouveau riche do not have the same reasons for speaking out because they would rather not change the system so long as they are the beneficiaries." In Indonesia the all-pervasive bureaucracy provides its four million members with all of their physical and most of their spiritual needs and receives slavish adherence in return. Indeed, to the extent that the Islamic middle class of Southeast Asia asserts itself at all, it finds its identity not in any decadent individualism but through a retreat into the more fundamentalist versions of its faith. Recently, the Malaysian government, which favors a market-friendly version of Islam, dramatically suppressed Al-Arqam, a fundamentalist Sufi sect that had become increasingly attractive to anxiety-ridden, young, urban Malay yuppies yearning for authenticity.

The sugar-coated bullets of the new Asian bourgeoisie are then notably blank when it comes to shooting down the autocratic barriers to a tolerant and liberal modernity. As the major beneficiary of thirty years of economic growth, the new middle class is highly dependent upon state largesse. Its defining characteristic is the deracinated anxiety of the arriviste, and the consequent search for political and social ties that offer reassurance and security. In return, dominant single parties or paternalistic leaders expect their middle class dependents to support actively their latest technocratic initiatives. Mere acquiescence is insufficient. Traditional understandings of harmony, balance and virtuous rule, suitably modified for mass consumption, reinforce rule by rational technocracy, on the grounds that the only alternative to bureaucratically determined consensus is unwanted and destabilizing conflict. There is in this evolving understanding no place for the articulation of competing interests, or the autonomous activities of an open society.

Managerial techniques derived from contemporary corporate capitalism further reinforce this intolerant political culture. The techno-paternalism of Pacific Asia postulates an economic rationalism in which state managers, entrepreneurs and administrators collectively develop the population as a resource. Monologue is the preferred mode of discourse and when the technocratized mandarin speaks, the people had better listen. In the Asian understanding of democracy, elections constitute a test of the rationality of the electorate rather than a verdict upon their rulers.

Maintaining the Balance

RATHER THAN CONFLICT between a ruling elite and an increasingly assertive bourgeoisie, we discover instead governments that are ideologically, economically, and sometimes ethnically homogeneous with the new Asian middle class. The problem of development consequently does not necessarily entail the resolution so eagerly anticipated by critics of the Asian model. Clearly neither the middle class nor their rulers want pluralism and diversity. Rather, the central political concern reflects a traditional Asian preoccupation with how to continue the rule of virtuous men and rational bureaucrats, in political cultures that have no understanding of the rule of law or the constitutional machinery to ensure smooth leadership transition.

This is most evidently the case in contemporary Indonesia and Malaysia. Political debate, to the extent that it exists, reflects

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oligarchic concern about how best to continue the stability that attracts economic investment, and to avoid the errors perpetrated in the West by what Mahathir Mohamad terms the "fanatical" advocates of liberal democracy—an arrangement which he and like-minded Asian nationalists associate with the real or imagined oppression of the colonial era. Paradoxically, both Mahathir and Suharto have become the unwitting victims of their own successful destruction of competing attachments in forging an increasingly centralized state and a new national consciousness. The very effectiveness of this modernization strategy has generated difficulties in managing increasing complexity in the context of generational transition.

Meanwhile, in Taiwan and South Korea the orthodox understanding of events—as a process of middle class pressure leading to constitutional reform—actually conceals the evolution of an elite strategy to renew consensus, stability and harmony. Thus, in South Korea the current constitution (the sixth since 1948) instituting civilian rule merely represents the latest attempt to guarantee moral and political certainty, this time through civilian as opposed to military patrons. An equally ambivalent search for a solution to the question of how to maintain stability in the face of an unwanted dilemma also explains constitutional innovation in Taiwan. In fact, it was the ruling Kuomintang (KMT) that promoted the change from autocracy to accountability, in order to guarantee smooth transition from Chiang Ching Kuo to the current indigenous President Lee Teng Hui and to address the daunting problem of Taiwan's political identity. For, rather worryingly in a political culture that craves certitude, the otherwise omniscient KMT cannot decide whether it is the de jure authority for all China or merely the de facto ruler of a small island state.

The problem for the KMT, then, as for Kim Young Sam's Democratic Liberal Party (DLP) in South Korea, stems not from any obvious middle class pressure for autonomy and political pluralism, but from elite uncertainty about how to proceed in the new world disorder. It is an uncertainty ill-suited to a parvenu, insecure, and intolerant middle class. Indeed, after almost a decade of liberalization we find the usually apolitical Taiwanese middle class taking an increasingly captious view of democratic reform. They find violent confrontation in the national assembly and the Legislative Yuan distastefully unconfucian. As Diane Ying, editor of the influential *Commonwealth* magazine observes, the Taiwanese do not want "greater freedom and democracy." Instead they admire "Singapore, run like a corporation with a common vision, a sense of mission, and visible strategies." A similar admiration for Singapore's apolitical managerialism has recently inspired Kim Young Sam to establish a governmental committee to transform South Korea into a clean and disciplined Northeast Asian version of the city-state.

In contrast to modernization orthodoxy, it seems that the continuing ability of the PAP to dominate both Singaporean politics and socio-economic development peculiarly suits the needs of the insecure, materialistic new middle class of Pacific Asia. In the course of its thirty-year management of government, bureaucracy, and economy, the PAP syncretically has blended a seemingly liberal market economic policy with a reinvented concern for Asian values of hierarchy and deference in order to create, as one Ministry of Community Development song has it, "One nation, one people, one Singapore." Just as one-party rule was—as the World Bank notes with admiration—"integral to Singapore's rapid industrialization and growth," so this style requires the continuing management of every aspect of Singapore's identity. In a recent National Day rally speech, emphasizing the centrality of filial piety and family values, Premier Goh Chok Tong sought to "stake out the moral markers twenty to thirty years in advance." In this understanding, the efficient Asian polis con-

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stitutes an enterprise association mobilized continually towards technocratically designed goals. Its efficacy consists in directing its members toward a collectively achievable vision. The relatively uncorrupt technocratic capacity to direct environmental and social policy constitutes a model of apolitical public administration to which the rest of Asia aspires.

The Asian Way

POLITICAL CHANGE IN contemporary Pacific Asia, then, constitutes neither an authoritarian response to middle class pressure nor reflects a wider societal demand for the polymorphous pleasures of a free media and a pluralistic civil society. Instead, such change represents the anxious and often proactive attempt by a virtuous mandarinate to maintain harmony, balance, and economic growth in a world that always threatens to dissolve into deracinating uncertainty.

Central to an understanding of what is going on is a realization that not only do the state managers require a leadership principle, the middle class also desires the certainty that techno-paternalism provides. This anxious pursuit of a hierarchically coded relationship is daily manifest in the ostensibly communitarian politics practiced in East and Southeast Asia, and is facilitated by an Asian understanding of power as the capacity to harmonize, balance and transmit an ethical understanding. Power is necessarily concentrated at a personal and geographical center, and subjects, particularly middle class ones, actively solicit dependency relationships. This means that any alteration in the distribution of power should not, in an Asian context, automatically be regarded as progress from rule by good men to the rule of law.

Indeed, Asian constitutions represent the mutable by-products that eventuate from the search for new "men of prowess" modified according to the current requirements of an apolitical technocracy and a neurotic middle class. Given the Asian understanding of leadership as the power to absorb difference and maintain consensus, the military autocratic style favored by a variety of Asian states in the early 1980s disturbingly intimated the actual or potential threat of violence. In East Asian political thought, such conflict implies imminent dissolution. Consequently, in the course of the 1980s, East and Southeast Asian states devised a series of managerial strategies not only to maintain the authority of the state but also to assuage the anxieties of emerging middle class groups, thus rendering these social groups both more visible and more pliable in order to establish the desired equilibrium—an equilibrium that gives the civil societies of East Asia their peculiarly ersatz and group conformist character. In other words, it is political technique reflected through a paradoxically conservative weave of tradition and national development that explains the differences in the political arrangements of modernized Pacific Asia.

Just as the ethic that has governed the East Asian Miracle and formed its middle class is antithetical to the pluralistic liberalism that shaped the historically contingent civil societies of Western Europe and North America, it also favors political arrangements that are both stable and inimical to Western civil understandings of tolerance, complexity, and diversity. Thus with regard to that truism of developmental economics that modernization brings about liberalization, Professor Jones might do well to meditate upon the Zen aphorism: "When we observe the incongruity between theories about life and what we feel intuitively to be true on the non-verbal, non-judging plane, there is nothing to do but laugh." □

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Policing the Golan?

Yes: Peter W. Rodman

IN MARCH 1975, the second Sinai negotiation between Israel and Egypt broke down. After several months of further labor, it was reconstructed successfully when a new element was added: Some Israeli warning stations in the heart of the Sinai were replaced by U.S. warning stations, and an American flag was flown over others. Both sides were reassured. For Egyptians it was a political gain to replace Israeli positions with something more palatable. For Israelis it was a reassurance that positions they vacated were filled by Americans.

Thus, a small but pivotal U.S. role made the difference, producing an agreement in September 1975 that was the foundation for the Camp David breakthrough three years later. The question now is whether the United States should be willing to play a similar role on the Golan Heights, if Israel and Syria should request it and if it should prove a necessary ingredient of a peace treaty between them.

It goes without saying that the United States has the sovereign right to decide if it wants to participate in this way, regardless of the parties' wishes. The U.S. is also entitled to its own assessment of the risks to which any likely treaty would subject its personnel. And the State Department needs to talk to the Pentagon—and to Congress—before it makes a concrete commitment.

But what in the end is a sensible analysis of those risks?

There are many traditional objections—especially Israeli objections—to the idea of stationing U.S. forces on Israel's borders. Proposals for U.S. troops, or for a U.S. defense guarantee, often came from Americans who wanted Israel to withdraw to less-than-secure borders and were proposing a U.S. role as a (poor) substitute. There was also Israel's justified mistrust of international "peacekeepers"—who were likely to cut and run in the face of enemy provocations (as in May 1967), while constraining Israel's freedom of action to preempt or respond forcefully to such provocations. I have always sympathized with these arguments.

The interesting question is why Yitzhak Rabin, who is not a fool, has abandoned these traditional Israeli arguments.

Rabin, as far as I can tell, has adopted a different strategic analysis. For one thing, it is clear that Syria has no realistic military option against Israel. In fact, this has been true ever since Egypt split off from the Arab coalition against Israel in the 1970s. It is powerfully reinforced by the disappearance of Syria's Soviet patron. Even with new Russian arms sales, the likelihood of a Russian air- or sea-lift to Syria in a crisis with Israel is nil. It is not the same Syria as before—because of objective circumstances that are forcing Syria into painful shifts of policy.

Israel's strategic problem today comes not from Syria, but from different directions. It comes from the periphery—from Iran and Iraq in the age of ballistic missiles and weapons of mass destruction—

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and from Islamic extremism nearby, whether Hizbollah or Hamas. Hizbollah will clearly have to be dealt with in any Syrian-Israeli package deal, in a way that neutralizes its terrorist threat and holds Syria accountable. But otherwise, the Golan Heights are not relevant to Israel's new strategic problem.

Israel, indeed, faces a golden opportunity to consolidate a political settlement with all the traditional confrontation states and to lock in a favorable strategic situation, in order to prepare itself better for the new threats. Peace treaties with Syria and Jordan will isolate the Palestinian Liberation Organization and contain the fallout of the inevitably messy Palestinian settlement; they will strengthen Israel's political position globally (and even in the Arab world), simplifying America's political problem in coming to Israel's aid in some future crisis.

By this analysis, the risks of Israeli withdrawal from the Golan Heights—and of course there are risks—are calculable and manageable, and are outweighed by the opportunity to break the back of Israel's security problem as traditionally conceived, in order to face up to the more deadly security challenges from a different direction.

What does this mean for the United States?

First of all, the U.S. is entitled to insist that a Syrian-Israeli peace treaty be rigorous and balanced in its own terms, with demilitarization and other security safeguards and significant political normalization, so that any American presence—while it may be a pivotal ingredient—would not be expected to prop up an otherwise unbalanced or precarious arrangement.

Second, we must have a concept of how our personnel can protect themselves in case of danger. Either we should send a large military unit capable of defending itself, or, if a smaller monitoring force, it should have the acknowledged right to remove itself in a dangerous situation. If an American presence would have an inhibiting effect on Israel's freedom of action, as critics fear, then the threat of U.S. withdrawal ought to be an additional disincentive for Syrian misbehavior.

Third, the U.S. is in a position to furnish additional assurance of the stability of the agreement by helping Israel maintain its technological military edge. Chief of Staff General Ehud Barak has visited the Pentagon to seek access to advanced U.S. technology (airborne radar and satellites) to ensure early warning of Syrian movements on or near an (evacuated) Golan. This makes sense.

Fourth, and more fundamentally, it is wrong for Americans to debate the risks of such an agreement—including the attendant risks to U.S. troops—in the framework of an anachronistic analysis of what the strategic dangers are.

Fifth, our debate should not be distorted by the eagerness of some Israelis to transplant their own domestic debate here. Likud figures have reportedly been active in the U.S. Congress since last May, trying to stir up American fears of the dangers that U.S. troops would face on the Golan. Likud opposes an Israeli withdrawal from the Golan, period. That is its right, but that is a question for Israel to decide; it is not for Americans to try to torpedo this negotiation. Our own participation, meanwhile, is something for *us* to decide, without the involvement of Israelis seeking to block their own government's policies.

Finally, it would be a mistake for supporters of a strong American defense posture to play too cavalierly on the isolationist instincts of the American public. On the strategic analysis, reasonable people can differ. But old-fashioned fear-mongering has also been in evidence in the catalogue of horrors of all the myriad things that could go wrong with a hypothetical agreement. If we are so fearful a country, then God help Israel if it should ever turn to us for rescue in some real crisis of survival. □

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No: Douglas J. Feith

AMERICAN AND ISRAELI officials say they expect U.S. troops to serve as peacekeepers or monitors on the Golan Heights in the event Israel and Syria conclude a peace agreement. Whether the United States should consent to such a deployment is a momentous question. The issue entails risks to the U.S. troops, including the threat of terrorist killings and abductions, increased likelihood of U.S. involvement in a war if Syrian-Israeli hostilities renew in the future, and an alteration in the U.S. role in the region—in particular, changes in the U.S.-Israeli relationship that could detract from Israel's deterrence capability and harm common interests of the two countries. Only a weighty rationale in favor of the deployment could justify its substantial costs and risks. But proponents have offered no such rationale.

Instead, they belittle the risks and talk generally about the enormous desirability of peace. One can share the enthusiasm for peace, however, without concluding that a U.S. deployment on the Golan would make a necessary or even a positive contribution toward the goal.

Those who would station U.S. forces on the Golan Heights should do more than state without explanation that the deployment is "crucial" or "vital" or "essential" to a new peace agreement. Is the deployment so important because the U.S. forces would actually have a definable mission to perform? If so, it is still sensible to ask whether that mission can be accomplished through less costly and less risky means. Or is the deployment "crucial" simply because some portion of the Israeli public, misunderstanding the role of the peacekeepers, will conclude that American troops will compensate for the security risks to Israel inherent in a withdrawal from Golan territory? If the latter, then the U.S. government should disabuse Israelis who harbor such unrealistic expectations about U.S. military protection. Even Americans eager for an Israeli-Syrian land-for-peace deal should not want Israel's Golan withdrawal premised on mistaken beliefs that can damage U.S. credibility.

Proponents of a U.S. Golan deployment assert that it will be no more hazardous than the Sinai Desert peacekeeping mission in which U.S. troops participate under the 1979 Egyptian-Israeli peace treaty. As the affirmative rationale, they talk of monitoring, deterring renewed fighting, and demonstrating U.S. support for Syrian-Israeli peace. There is value in all three of these functions, but U.S. troops on the Golan are not required to perform them. And the aforementioned costs and risks of such a U.S. Golan mission would far outweigh the benefits it might yield.

Israel (let alone Syria) will not look to neutral U.S. observers for military intelligence and early warning. Such information is essential to national security and the parties will not "contract out" for it. If pressed, Israeli officials will admit that relying on U.S. troops to provide filtered intelligence according to timetables subject to U.S. policy is not a realistic alternative for Israel, whose survival hinges on early warning and rapid mobilization of reserve forces.

Monitoring treaty compliance is an important function for which the treaty signatories might actually look to a third party. But this job can be done without giving U.S. troops a dangerous and costly long-term assignment on the Golan Heights. If a party wants an American referee for a particular treaty compliance controversy, the

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United States could dispatch monitors to the area on a case-by-case basis.

Would U.S. troops on the Golan enhance deterrence of aggression, reducing the likelihood of a Syrian military attack against Israel in the future? Might those troops constitute a "tripwire"—that is, a means of ensuring that a future Syrian aggression would trigger massive U.S. reinforcement of the peacekeeping forces?

A U.S. "tripwire" is a rare obligation of a character that requires a treaty commitment duly approved by the U.S. Senate. The Clinton administration cannot create such a tripwire simply by entering into a trilateral peacekeeping arrangement. Israel would err dangerously if it assumed that U.S. peacekeepers harmed in the event of renewed aggression or terrorism would necessarily function as a tripwire. On the contrary, the President might decide to withdraw them altogether rather than reinforce them, as the history of American troop withdrawals from Lebanon in 1983 and Somalia in 1993 suggests.

In any event, the United States should not want to take on a tripwire obligation to enter a future war when there is no necessity to do so. Israel can defend itself. It is not in either country's interest that Israel begin to rely for its defense on U.S. troops. Furthermore, even if it offered to create such a tripwire, the United States lacks military airlift, sealift and other capabilities that would be required to defend Israel, which is very small geographically, in a timely fashion if Syrian armor were overrunning the Jewish state.

It has been contended that U.S. Golan peacekeepers would force the Syrian government to think twice about renewing aggression against Israel, given the dangers of antagonizing the United States. If, however, a Syrian government contemplated starting a war with Israel after signing a peace treaty, it would have to take antagonism of the United States into account *whether or not* U.S. troops are on the Golan. At most, such troops would play a marginal role in Syrian calculations.

If it relinquishes buffer territory on the Golan Heights, Israel will have to increase its reliance on preemption—that is, revert to the strategy it employed in the days before the 1967 war, when it could not afford to absorb a first blow. The decision to preempt is never easy and would be rendered far costlier if an Israeli preemptive strike would endanger U.S. peacekeeping forces. If Israeli officials faced threatening Syrian troop movements, for example, they would feel compelled to consult with the U.S. government before taking action, even if they concluded that preemption of the Syrian threat is necessary. The U.S. government cannot be expected to endorse fully and readily, if at all and if ever, an Israeli decision to strike first. This is true even though Israeli preemption may serve both Israeli and U.S. interests. It is simply not part of the standard operating procedure of a major power like the United States to authorize its friends to take rapid and unilateral military action.

U.S. officials would raise skeptical questions about the interpretation of the intelligence and would counsel intensified diplomatic efforts to avert military action. Israel's options would then be, first, to defer to the United States and forego preemption, accepting the military dangers that would result or, second, to defy the United States and preempt, notwithstanding the harm that may come to the U.S. peacekeepers and the resulting blame that will attach to Israel. There can be no more dangerous time for Israel to quarrel with the U.S. government and offend the American public than at the start of a war, so Israel would face a grim dilemma with consequences of the highest order. Putting our Israeli allies in such a position is not desirable for the United States.

In sum, U.S. officials must anticipate the possibility (even if they would not actually predict that it will occur) that military tensions between Syria and Israel will rise again

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after a peace treaty. In that event, U.S. Golan peacekeepers are more likely to deter Israel from taking defensive action than Syria from initiating an aggression. This is likely to be one of the gravest and most perverse consequences of the U.S. deployment.

The analogy between U.S. peacekeepers on the Golan and those already in the Sinai cannot withstand analysis. The dangers on the Golan would be far larger for a number of reasons, including the fact that the Sinai is roughly 150 miles wide while the Golan is 10, hence Golan peacekeepers would be squeezed tightly between two heavily armed parties; the Sinai has no substantial population, while the Golan region's many towns and villages could provide effective cover for terrorists; the Golan borders south Lebanon, the world center of international terrorism; Syria's relations with Israel and the United States, even if a peace treaty is signed, will be of far lower quality than Egypt's have been.

The issue of U.S. forces on the Golan Heights involves large stakes for the United States. It deserves rigorous thinking. There is nothing that the U.S. forces would do there that would make them important, let alone indispensable, to the achievement of peace between Syria and Israel. It is an assertion, not analysis—and a negligent assertion, at that—to say that if one favors peace one must favor U.S. troops on the Golan Heights. Airy contentions about the obligation to demonstrate, through U.S. peacekeeping forces, America's support for the peace process are no substitute for a proper cost-benefit study of the matter. Such a study can lead to only one conclusion: U.S. forces on the Golan Heights would make a net *negative* contribution to regional peace and security and to other U.S. national interests. If Israel and Syria are informed that U.S. peacekeepers are not in the cards, they can plan accordingly as they negotiate security arrangements for their anticipated peace treaty. □

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Cultures of Spying

James Sherr

IN THE UNITED States, spying has often been regarded as necessary, at times even as vital. But it has never been regarded as a normal peacetime pursuit. During the Second World War, the CIA's precursor, the OSS, mounted a vast cryptographic effort against Germany and Japan, thanks in part to the support of Secretary of War Henry L. Stimson. Yet Stimson was also the man who, as Secretary of State in 1929, closed up the State Department's cryptographic section with the famous quip that "gentlemen do not read each other's mail." With its post-Victorian overtones, that quip now has the resonance of a bygone age. Not so, however, the assumption that lies behind it: Spying has no place in a "normal" world.

The "clash of civilizations," often debated in these pages, has an analogue in the clash of intelligence services and of intelligence cultures. Centuries before Clausewitz wrote his treatise *On War*, many countries inside and outside Europe regarded peace and war as complementary, rather than opposite, poles of activity. Many still do. In these countries, spying, like war, has been regarded as the continuation of policy by other means. The same has been true for other activities that intelligence services have been known to conduct: subversion, sabotage, disinformation, and assassination. So, too, for the reverse side of intelligence: counter-intelligence, and the need to maintain good spies at home. In the Clausewitzian tradition, or for that matter the tradition of Sun Tzu, any peacetime activity—be it spying, negotiation, or commerce—*may* signify friendship, but just as often its purpose may be winning without fighting.

The surprising thing is not that the United States does not share this tradition, but that in spite of two great wars and a cold war in this century, it has been so little affected by it. The intertwining of "CIA" and "Cold War"—not only in the public mind but in historical fact—demonstrates the point rather than refutes it. To the supporters of what became the U.S. intelligence community, there could be no serious doubt that the Soviet Union was an enemy, an enemy with secrets, indeed an enemy who regarded secrecy as one of its most potent weapons. Moreover, even in those menacing climes, the intelligence services had their critics—not merely professional critics who felt that they were doing a poor job, but *principled* critics who took issue with the job itself. Such critics could also be found in other Western democracies, but with a difference. There, these critics, overwhelmingly of the Left, saw their intelligence services as servants of an ideology they mistrusted or abhorred. American critics mistrusted the CIA not because it was the faithful servant, but

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because it threatened to slip the leash of the master; not because it advanced American values, but because it stood in contradiction to them.

To a significant degree, these are the values of Enlightenment liberalism. Respect for what is rational and provable, the conviction that the national interest lies not simply in advancing *interests* but in placing international relations on a higher plane, the association of peace with cooperation, the belief that interdependence not only demands tolerance but breeds it, the notion that markets are a solvent amongst nations and a liberator of peoples: all of these ideas fell into place by the mid-eighteenth century. In the following century, all of them were challenged by ideologies of the Left and Right: ideologies that equated peace with struggle, interdependence with friction, markets with rivalry—and in many cases elevated will over reason.

If the Enlightenment's more extreme Darwinian foes can be said to have lost their bids for power, it can not be said that the Enlightenment has won. Even in Western Europe, a judicious grain of realpolitik is respected, and conservative skepticism carries considerable weight. Even in the British foreign policy establishment, many who hold Enlightenment values hide them, and many who pay lip service to them tend not to hold them. But in the United States, these values remain firmly in the grammar of thinking and discourse, and whilst they can be questioned, one ignores them at one's peril. They neither rule spying out nor rule it in. But they have an effect on how the United States conducts intelligence activity and just as much of an effect on how the U.S. expects others to conduct it.

We Have The Technology

ON THE FACE of it, there is nothing peculiarly American about the desire for high technology intelligence. Most intelligence services, given the choice, would prefer to have technologically advanced tools at their disposal rather than primitive ones. But Americans do seem peculiarly prone to equate intelligence technology with intelligence effectiveness. As a case in point, last July former Director of Central Intelligence Stansfield Turner argued that separating CIA analysts from spies would "make the CIA's spies face up to today's seminal trend in the collection of human intelligence—the role of technology."[1] But if U.S. intelligence services have not faced up to this role over all of these years, then which intelligence service has: China's? Syria's? Russia's? Israel's? By any standard, the United States has an intelligence community that is technologically minded; by some standards, technologically obsessed. It does not follow that U.S. intelligence services are more proficient than all of the others.

Are calls for better technology the remedy of the doctor or the addict? The reason that technology not only matters but matters so much may be that Americans are morally and philosophically comfortable with it. In the public mind at least, satellites and other "national technical means" are intrusive without being physically invasive; their job is not to create deception, but to uncover it. Secrecy, wrote Senator Moynihan in this journal, "has twisted us body and soul." It is clear that he and others regard satellites as subverters of secrecy. Not only are they consistent with the "policy of complete openness in all areas of information," they are positively conducive to it.[2] What adds to their appeal is that satellites, unlike human beings, do not betray. The Ames affair is an ugly reminder of the fact that people have minds of their own, prone to baseness at worst and to bias at best. In contrast, the camera, the microphone and their state-of-the-art descendants lack the

[1]Stansfield Turner, "For Smarter Intelligence: Separate Spies from Analysts," *The Washington Post*, July 24, 1994.

[2]Senator Daniel Patrick Moynihan, "End the Torment of Secrecy," *The National Interest* (Spring 1992), p. 21.

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mind, will, or reason to do anything other than record what is there.

Is it really so? For any number of reasons, the proposition is highly debatable. In spy novels, satellites read secret correspondence and eavesdrop on pillow talk, but in real world conditions, high technology assets tend to be partially sighted and hearing impaired. Moreover, even when they are accurate, they are not intelligent. What they record, they record without discrimination; what they miss is missed. For this reason alone, intelligence data will be analyzed (and all too often "processed") by fallible individuals and by institutions that try to compensate for these fallibilities by devising conventions and procedures for deciding what is relevant and what is irrelevant, what is evidence and what is chaff. Unless analysts understand the mentality of their opponents, the analysis will suffer or even fail.

A classic example, from a comparatively low technology age, provides a paradigm for many a high technology failure. Six months into the Barbarossa campaign, the German Army high command (OKH) realized that it had grossly underestimated the Red Army's ability to generate new divisions, as well as the equipment stocks it had at its disposal. What the OKH misunderstood was something that better reconnaissance might not have revealed by itself: the "cadre" organization of the Red Army and the administrative arrangements that the Soviets had devised to shift the country from a peacetime to a wartime footing. Had they understood these things, the Germans would have launched the campaign on very different assumptions from those that prevailed in 1941. In fact, they might not have launched it at all.

The belief that we are too advanced to make similar mistakes will always increase the risk of making them. Why did NATO underestimate by an order of magnitude the weapons stocks and infrastructure of Soviet and East German forces in the former GDR? Why did the CIA ignore evidence of the Soviet leadership's nuclear shelter program, dispute the existence of refire missiles for Soviet ICBM silos, and underestimate the Soviet nuclear weapons inventory by 50 percent?[3] Why did the United States have such a poor understanding of Iraq's nuclear program before UNSCOM entered the country, and why were Western commanders taken aback by the breadth of Iraq's military infrastructure during the Gulf War? As the London *Times* defense correspondent wrote in February 1991: "It seems incredible that even America, with all its intelligence capabilities did not know about the development of underground bunkers, giant ammunition storage sites and networks of command and control facilities."[4]

But the incredible is all too possible if analysts assume that the opponent shares one's own notion of rationality and one's own calculus of means and ends. To a country like the United States, whose overriding aim is to deter nuclear war, it stands to reason that nuclear forces should be visible. To a country like the Soviet Union, whose aim was to prepare for nuclear war, it stood to reason that trumps should be concealed. In a comfortable democracy, proportionality, pragmatism, and cost-effectiveness are rationality itself; but a regime as desperate and determined as Saddam Hussein's will try to wring blood out of a stone. There is too much complacency in the view that technology, the weapon of the rich, will always prevail against resourcefulness and guile, the weapons of the poor.

My Ally, The Spy

THE POST-COLD War intelligence environment is proving to be

[3]William T. Lee, "What Intelligence Edge?," *The Washington Post*, July 26, 1994. For an exhaustive catalogue, see Bryan D. Dailey and Patrick J. Parker, *Soviet Strategic Deception* (Lexington, MA: Lexington Books/Hoover Institution Press, 1987).

[4]Michael Evans, "West Stunned by Enormous Scale of Iraqi Fighting Machine," *The Times*, February 13, 1991.

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very different from that which was anticipated. At the outset of his illuminating book, *Friendly Spies*, Peter Schweizer cites a White House Office of Science and Technology estimate that industrial espionage by friendly intelligence services might be costing the United States as much as $100 billion a year. The practice of economic spying by allied intelligence services was an open secret amongst many FBI and CIA professionals during the Cold War. To much of the policy-making community, however, the scale of this activity has come as a shock; so, too, the fact that it emanates not only from Japan and the industrial tyros of the Pacific, but from the French *Direction Générale de la Sécurité Extérieure* (DGSE) and, in more modest proportions, from Germany's *Bundesnachrichtendienst* (BND). As a retired DGSE director explains, espionage against allies should not be viewed through an ethical prism:

> You have to separate very clearly what are the fields which are covered by an alliance and the fields which are not covered....In all of the [latter] fields, being allied does not prevent the states from being competitors....Even during the Cold War, getting intelligence on economic, technological and industrial matters...was not incompatible with the fact that you were allies.

But it certainly has been incompatible with American expectations about how allies ought to behave, as an official of the Defense Department's Security Institute has noted:

> At the interpersonal level, most of us expect open and honest behavior by friends, and covert, deceitful behavior by enemies. Many people are surprised when it doesn't work out that way at the international scene.[5]

Plainly, many are also surprised when foreign capitalists do not share the American capitalist ethos. In myth, and to a large degree in fact, that ethos is competition. Competition can be ruthless, but unlike spying, it is open. Customers are there to be won, not suborned; competitors exist to be surpassed, not undermined. The American ethos is also self-reliance. Even in an age of big lobbies and big government, American business is at least ambivalent towards government, and, at most, adversarial towards it. The job of government is to maintain those rules *we* consider fair, and when others break the rules, its job is to retaliate. In conditions short of war, partnership with government is uncomfortable to American business, collusion is unwelcome, and coordination is anathema. How very different things are in the semi-corporatist cultures of continental Europe, where, unlike Britain and America, the attack on mercantilism never turned into an assault on mercantilist values.

These differences are not simply matters of sentiment, but part of the legal contexts in which intelligence, counterintelligence and business operate. As the subtitle of Schweizer's book reminds us—"How America's allies are using economic espionage to *steal* [my emphasis] our secrets"—industrial espionage is not equated with business but with theft, in America. For similar reasons, U.S. law prohibits U.S. intelligence services from relaying advantageous commercial information to American companies. French and German law does nothing of the kind.

Can the United States protect itself from these "friendly" opponents without becoming like them? It is an old question, dating from the days of unfriendly opponents. Progress will depend upon measures that the Senate Intelligence Committee has identified: giving FBI counterintelligence the resources to unmask "friendly spies" and giving law enforcement the teeth to punish them. But just as much, it depends upon

[5]Estimate and citations from Peter Schweizer, *Friendly Spies: How America's Allies are Using Economic Espionage to Steal our Secrets* (New York: Atlantic Monthly Press, 1993), pp. 24, 9 and 22 respectively.

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public recognition that friendship is rarely unqualified, that rivalry can be vigorous even where enmity is absent, and that threat need not be synonymous with ideological conflict. A country able to accept these truths about allies might at last be able to apply them to its former adversary as well.

Russia: As You Were

AS EARLY AS November 1991, Peter Frisch, deputy director of German counterintelligence, observed that the "phase of stagnation" in Soviet intelligence (as it still was) had come to an end. From the spring of 1992 onwards, it became obvious to U.S., British, Scandinavian, and Benelux services that if the Soviet Union was disintegrating, Russia's intelligence services were recovering. In the face of this recovery, three tenets of conventional wisdom have proved remarkably tenacious: one, the persistence of Russian spying shows that Yeltsin is too weak to control the KGB's successors; two, Russian spying, unlike Soviet spying, is aimed at gathering economic rather than military secrets; and three, Russia cannot afford to remain an intelligence superpower.

Over a year after the suppression of Yeltsin's opponents in the Russian White House, the first of these propositions is the least sustainable. In the spring of 1994, Boris Yeltsin outlined his policy in no uncertain terms to the senior staffs of Russia's Foreign Intelligence Service and its Federal Counter-Intelligence Service. Whilst welcoming the "end of global confrontation," he warned that "ideological conflicts are being replaced by a struggle for spheres of influence in geopolitics" and asserted that "there are forces abroad that would like to keep Russia in a state of controllable paralysis." For these reasons, he maintained, it was vital that Russia possess "effective and combatable" intelligence, counterintelligence and special services.[6]

Far more perplexing than Yeltsin's statements is the failure of Western governments to acknowledge them and give them their due. This failure suggests it might be the West that views Russia through the prism of ideology, rather than the other way around. With injudicious ardor and condescension, Western governments have acted as sponsors of Russia's transition to democracy and capitalism, forgetting that these concepts would either acquire a distinctly Russian meaning or perish. After three years of wading through the ruins and debris of the Soviet collapse, it is not surprising that Russians are rediscovering the circumstances, conditions and imperatives that make Russia Russia. Nor is it surprising that, in the words of Yeltsin's press secretary, "The romantic embrace with the West is over."

What Russians have rediscovered is that their state, even in truncated form, is a multinational empire which, by virtue of its scale and location, is doomed to be a great power. It is not only unreasonable but absurd to suppose that Russia can conduct herself on the world stage in the manner of the Czech Republic. Yet it is naive to overlook the fact that Russia is finding it difficult to survive as a great power without reviving its armed forces, its security organs and its intelligence services—the very institutions that, with the exception of the Communist Party, are most closely associated with Russia's Soviet past. How to revive these institutions without reviving their influence, interests, and methods is a question with no apparent answer.

Hence, we face the paradox that, for geopolitical rather than ideological reasons, the "new" Russia retains a strong intelligence profile and a traditional intelligence culture, distinct from and alien to our own. Whereas the heads of CIA and DIA must justify the survival of their services in the absence of an enemy, Russian intelligence needs no justifi-

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[6]For his remarks to the Foreign Intelligence Service, see; SVR: ITAR-TASS in *BBC Summary of World Broadcasts*, April 29, 1994; for those to the Counter-Intelligence Service, see; *Rossiiyskaya Gazeta*, May 30, 1994.

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cation in the eyes of the country's leadership. A strong, "combatable" intelligence service is an attribute of a great power; espionage and its darker offshoots are legitimate tools of policy, no less legitimate for being covert. Far from denying the allegations of Western counterintelligence, Russia's leaders are indignant about the indignation that we express.

Nevertheless, in Russia as in other countries, spying is not a custom but a tool of policy; spies do not graze the field aimlessly, they carry out tasks. *What* tasks? As the second tenet of conventional wisdom states, most Russian intelligence collection targets technology. What the conventional wisdom omits is that the greater proportion of such collection is conducted not by Foreign Intelligence, but by the Chief Intelligence Directorate of the Russian Army's General Staff (GRU), whose chief, as recently as 1992, identified espionage as "one of the means of supporting combat activity." Conventional wisdom also fails to note that influence as well as "collection" was a priority task for Foreign Intelligence's predecessor, the KGB. KGB "active measures" ranging from the discreetly manipulative to the coercive, were largely what led Ambassador George Kennan to characterize the USSR as a country that established correct relations with foreign governments only to undermine the political orders that sustained them. These measures also testified to the counterintelligence bias that still seems to guide Russian *foreign* intelligence activity. Whereas the main task of U.S. counterintelligence is to counter the actions of foreign intelligence services on U.S. soil, in Russia the "main rule," as Yeltsin describes it, is that "*any* action capable of damaging national interests should be prevented or neutralized." His pronouncements on the subject leave one in little doubt that counterintelligence still begins abroad.

What role, if any, do "active measures" play for a post-Communist Russia? In the former Soviet republics of the so-called near abroad, clearly a very large one.[7] Deposed governments—and in the Baltic states, current ones—are convinced that these measures remain highly useful to a state that now defines opposition in national, rather than ideological terms. In a weakened and image-conscious Russia, the staple tools of active measures—"penetration," "provocations," "disinformation," and "agent of influence" operations—are not only effective, they are cost-effective and deniable.

But in the West, where Russia's aim is cooperation rather than de-stabilization, the position is radically different. That does not necessarily mean that "active measures" and influence activities can be dispensed with. Mikhail Gorbachev elevated cooperation to a new "norm" of international relations. Yet Todd Leventhal, USIA policy officer responsible for countering "active measures" at that time documented the intensity of these activities to the U.S. Congress.[8] What had changed was the tenor of these measures: more conciliatory that antagonistic, but no less manipulative or deceptive. When Yeltsin states that "guaranteeing access to other countries' markets is a responsibility not only of the Economics Ministry and Foreign Ministry, but of *Foreign Intelligence*," he too may be suggesting that Russia not only needs agents, but agents of influence.

The Intelligence Business

THE THIRD TENET of Western conventional wisdom—that Russia cannot afford to remain an intelligence

[7]See for example, *"Back in the USSR:" Russia's Intervention in the Internal Affairs of the Former Soviet Republics and the Implications for U.S. Policy Toward Russia* (John F. Kennedy School of Government, Harvard University, January 1994).

[8]Todd Leventhal, *Soviet Active Measures in the "Post-Cold War Era"* (USIA report to Congress, June, 1992), and Charles Z. Wick, *Soviet Influence Activities: A Report on Active Measures and Propaganda, 1986-87.*

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superpower—emerged during the final stages of the Soviet economic collapse. In the USSR itself, by contrast, what emerged at the time was a new and ominous phrase: "non-budgetary resources for defense and security policy." Today these resources are considerable. At the same time, they are blurring the distinction between state policy and private pursuits, if not merging them.

To the eighteenth-century historian, this blurring and merging is not only comprehensible, but fully compatible with the rivalry of states. To many a twentieth-century American politician—not to speak of American lawyers—it is incompatible by definition. To such people, the revelation that hundreds of serving and retired KGB generals, GRU officers and military commanders own, or serve on the boards of, commercial structures suggests not that intelligence is changing its character, but that it has been thrown overboard. Hence, the most recent tenet of conventional wisdom: the "KGB" is simply out to get rich.

Even in this century, things have never been so simple. Before the Saudis turned off the tap, the PLO was also a business—as to a considerable extent is the IRA. China has shifted arms transfers out of the domain of charity into profitable, commercial enterprise, yet these transfers still support a policy of diminishing military imbalances between North and South. BCCI was a get-rich scheme par excellence, but that does not seem to have prevented its chiefs from funding part of Pakistan's nuclear weapons program. All of these entities have had mixed motives and shrewd ones. But if we are to believe the latest conventional wisdom, Russians are clowns.

The creation of FAPSI—the Federal Agency for Government Communications and Information—belies it. Embracing the former KGB's communications assets, academies, and troops, it is one of three entities entitled to conduct foreign intelligence activity. But while it is a "strictly classified organization," it is also a business, with a right to lease communications to foreign investors, invest in foreign commercial entities and set up companies abroad. According to Victor Yasmann of Radio Liberty, not only does it have the potential to pay for itself, it has acquired partial control of government communications and media outlets in the near abroad, and, through affiliates, joint ventures, and fronts, may seek advanced communications technologies and broadcasting interests in the West.[9]

Of all the challenges we face, it is here that America's cultural assumptions may need greatest re-examination. By all the traditional benchmarks, Russian intelligence may be weaker than the KGB, and doubtless is. Nevertheless, these benchmarks are relevant to the monolith we knew, not to the semi-commercialized and fragmented entities we now confront. In a world of such players, when does business become intelligence—or, for that matter, sabotage and crime? How is intelligence to be defined, identified and countered when the entities conducting it might be pursuing a mixture of private, institutional and state agendas, rather than any one of these alone? Where are the frontiers between state and anti-state, legal and criminal in such a world? These questions should be keeping intelligence professionals hard at work and up at night. Those who seek answers in "conspiracy theory" or in its more fashionable alternative, "chaos theory," will be doing their countries little service. □

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[9]Victor Yasmann, "The KGB and Internal Security," *RFE/RL Research Report*, January 3, 1992.

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The Future of Intelligence

Abram N. Shulsky and Gary J. Schmitt

WITHIN HOURS OF the arrest of CIA officer Aldrich Ames for espionage, unnamed agency officials were telling reporters that Ames was a drunk and a mediocre case officer. In the weeks that followed, former superiors and fellow officers described him as inept, dull, unsophisticated and lackadaisical. The comments were not surprising. Agency employees wanted to distance themselves from the alleged traitor in their midst, and so were quick to point out that Ames was neither well regarded nor typical of the caliber of personnel within the CIA component that handled clandestine human intelligence activity, the Directorate of Operations.

What was typical, however, was the nonchalance with which an officer of Ames' low caliber was allowed to proceed from job to job within the operations directorate, without anyone in a managerial position seeming to focus on the fact that the organization had a problem on its hands. As the agency's inspector general subsequently noted, Ames was "not going anywhere and no one cared."

Nevertheless, CIA comments at the time of Ames' arrest are revealing. After all, the officer whom the anonymous agency sources were trashing (and had been judged by the CIA at one point to be the third-worst officer among two hundred at his rank) had been only a few years before entrusted with one of the most sensitive posts within the intelligence community—chief of the counterintelligence branch of the Soviet-East European division of the operations directorate. The damage he could and did do to U.S. and allied intelligence operations in the Soviet Union was immense.[1] That the agency was willing to give Ames this position says as much about how important the CIA considers counterintelligence as any stack of pronouncements to the contrary from a succession of directors of central intelligence.

Of course, this is not news. For twenty years, since the forced retirement in 1974 of James Angleton, long-time chief of the agency's counterintelligence staff, counterintelligence (or CI) has been a subordinate discipline at Langley, occasionally called upon but generally reviled and ignored. A Capitol Hill staffer had an occasion to learn about this view first hand some years ago, in the course of explaining to an operations officer a bit of

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[1]According to official accounts, Ames' activities resulted in the death of at least ten CIA/FBI agents, the compromise of more than one hundred U.S. and allied intelligence operations, disclosure of scores of undercover and "deep" cover agency officers, and the loss of thousands of pages of top secret documents.

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Machiavellian maneuvering going on in Congress. With a big smile on his face, and with a professional comic's sense of timing, the officer replied, "You know, you have a CI mentality...and where I come from, that is not a compliment."

The cost of this contempt came high. We now know that virtually all East German and Cuban spies recruited by the agency for more than a decade were in fact double agents, controlled by those states' intelligence services. In the absence of an effective, in-house counterintelligence capability to review and challenge these recruitments, the CIA was manipulated by the Cuban and East German services, which fed the agency inconsequential, or perhaps even deliberately deceptive, reports.

Paradoxically, against this background (but only against this background), the handling of the Ames case reflects somewhat more credit on the agency than has been recognized. After a succession of its agents had been "rolled up" by the KGB in the mid-1980s, the leadership of the CIA's operations directorate knew it had a serious problem and began an investigation. But the question was, how, precisely, were its operations being compromised? Was it connected to the treachery and subsequent defection of ex-CIA officer Edward Lee Howard, to the lapse of embassy security associated with the Marine Guard scandal in Moscow, to a compromise of a communication channel used by U.S. intelligence, or perhaps a bit of each? Or was it any clandestine service's worst nightmare, a mole?

Investigating the possible causes and eliminating those which do not pan out is the heart of the counterintelligence effort in such instances. A major complication in investigating the mole possibility was the (absurd) fact that initially some two hundred individuals were thought to have had access to the information associated with the failed operations. In addition, the pattern of failures was not continuous. Although, in retrospect, the pattern strongly suggested a mole whose access varied over time—as Ames' did—its significance could only be grasped in retrospect.[2]

That said, the CIA's effort to get to the bottom of its losses was nevertheless, according to the inspector general's review, marked by "almost complete indifference" on the part of the agency's leadership. This indifference, combined with the fact that investigators lacked resources and that their efforts were bureaucratically splintered between the agency's Counterintelligence Center, the Office of Security and the Soviet-East European Division, meant that the molehunt would inevitably turn into the tragic comedy of errors that it became. Ames, by any measure of the clandestine art, was a buffoon. Yet, for nearly a decade, he escaped arrest.

This judgment is not intended to make light of the difficulty of combining aggressive intelligence collection efforts with the skeptical eye of counterintelligence. Too strong a CI hand can have a "chilling effect" on operations. If its hand is weak, however, the collectors are apt to play down signs that they are being deceived and to ignore indications—such as Ames' lifestyle and behavior—that one of their own has betrayed them and their country. Although it is admittedly difficult to do, it appears that the CIA has for some time stopped even trying to find the proper balance between counterintelligence and "positive" intelligence collection.[3]

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[2]Ames started working for the KGB in the spring of 1985, at which time he was counterintelligence chief for Soviet-East European operations. A year later he was posted to the U.S. Embassy in Rome where he served until July 1989. Ames then returned to CIA headquarters where he again worked within SE and then on the staff of the Counterintelligence Center.

[3]As noted in the Senate report on Ames, in the mid-1980s PFIAB had criticized CIA's handling of internal CI cases, ascribing the problem to institutional factors and a "fundamental inability of anyone in the SE division to think the unthinkable—that a DO employee could engage in espionage."

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The Larger Point

WITH THE intelligence community already under pressure to reform and downsize, the Ames case has further fueled post-Cold War skepticism about intelligence in general and espionage in particular. The case seems to prove the essential irrelevance of human intelligence: one service perfectly places a mole inside its enemy's service, but its side loses anyway. As a *New York Times* editorial put it, "Spy wars are a sideshow of passionate interest to the actors, but of marginal significance for national policy."

Skepticism is not limited to liberals. Angelo Codevilla, former Republican staff member of the Senate Intelligence Committee and conservative critic of American intelligence performance, observes that it is better for a country not to have a clandestine service at all than to have one that has been penetrated. While it is true that a penetrated operation is positively harmful, one can't conclude that if one of its operations is compromised, all of a clandestine service's activities are worthless. Similarly, Edward Jay Epstein, an author generally supportive of Angleton's theories about intelligence and CI, argues that the danger of being misled by moles and double agents outweighs the benefits sought through espionage, especially during times of peace:

> In peacetime, the products of espionage tend to be things like reports about policy discussions, which are rarely verifiable...In a protracted peace...espionage data become not only less urgent but also increasingly subject to manipulation.[4]

It is better, according to Epstein, to gather information by "spy satellites" and "other licit" means, such as news stories, diplomatic reports, and the like. Although such collection mechanisms will probably not provide the kind of intelligence on the secret intentions of other nations that policymakers normally want, officials can adjust to this shortfall by routinely basing their national security decisions and policies "on a worst-case analysis, leavened by common sense." At bottom, Epstein's argument is that the U.S. isn't very good at the business of espionage and should, rather than run the risk of being misled, just get out of it.

The record, however, is more mixed than the agency's critics are sometimes willing to admit. Although the KGB, GRU (Soviet/Russian military intelligence) and their Warsaw Pact allies had their successes, the American intelligence effort has not been a total disaster. Oleg Penkovskiy, Dmitri Polyakov, Adolf Tolkachev, and Ryszard Kuklinski are just a few of the more important spies run by U.S. intelligence during the Cold War. The information they provided on Soviet missiles, intelligence operations, military research and development, and battle plans for Europe was extremely valuable. At the end of the day, the human intelligence scorecard may have favored Soviet intelligence, but the U.S. was far from shut out.

In any case, as our failure with respect to the pre-Gulf War Iraqi nuclear program shows, open sources and high-technology means of collection are not sufficient or can themselves be misleading. Despite its massive size, Iraq's program to develop nuclear weapons went largely undetected by American reconnaissance satellites. By using carefully planned denial and deception measures, Saddam Hussein was able to keep the United States thoroughly in the dark about the program until after the war, when an Iraqi defector began to provide key data on Iraq's effort to build a bomb. The general capabilities of U.S. reconnaissance satellites, remarkable as they are, are becoming increasingly known to the world; against clever opponents, they can no longer be expected to make up for a lack of human

[4] "Why Spy?," *The New York Times Magazine*, May 22, 1994.

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reporting as they once did in the case of countries behind the Iron Curtain.

Further, with the end of the Soviet empire, the number of "hard targets"—countries whose internal security services and security practices are so extensive as to make human operations especially difficult—has dropped dramatically. While Stalinist regimes like that of North Korea still exist, the fact of the matter is that espionage is likely to be more, rather than less, useful in the post-Cold War period, as we deal not with a "denied area" like the Soviet Union but rather with a series of weak or failed regimes where, one imagines, a moderate amount of hard currency safely tucked away in a Swiss bank account can go a long, long way.

Human intelligence (HUMINT, in intelligence jargon) is not only easier to do, but in many cases is more important. Technical collection allowed us to track Soviet military capabilities with some precision, which was our core concern. But most countries we are interested in cannot threaten us in the same fashion. In states such as Haiti, Serbia or any one of a dozen similar hot-spots, what American policymakers care about are the intentions of a small number of leaders. Those intentions can generally only be obtained through clandestine human collection. Even where we care about capabilities—as in the area of proliferation—human intelligence may be the only effective means of overcoming the target's ability to hide the precise scope of its operations from overhead reconnaissance (for instance, through extensive tunneling, a North Korean specialty) and international inspections.

Epstein's alternative in such instances is to forgo HUMINT and base U.S. national security decisions on "worst-case analysis." Leaving aside the fact that it is not necessarily clear what this means in policy terms with respect to places like Haiti or Somalia, how could one expect the public and Congress to support defense and foreign policies that constantly insisted that the sky was falling and the wolf is at the door? Although it would be foolish to believe that one's espionage operations will never be penetrated by the other side, it is just as impractical to believe the United States actually could conduct its national security affairs on such a basis.

In a time of declining defense expenditures and general uncertainty in key areas of the world, intelligence is not less important than it was in the past and clandestine human collection is probably more so. As the margin of U.S. safety and preeminence slips in the years ahead, there will be an even greater need for the foresight provided by high quality intelligence, not less.

To Centralize or Not?

GIVEN THE continuing need to spy, the main issue is how to organize and reform U.S. intelligence for best results. Indeed, this was the concern of both the chairmen of House and Senate intelligence committees in separate bills introduced in 1992. Although neither bill was enacted, Robert Gates, then director of central intelligence, put watered-down versions of some of their ideas into force administratively.[5]

These reforms were put forward as a response to the end of the Cold War, but the proposals actually predate 1989. In fact, they reflect an evolutionary trend within the national security establishment since the beginning of the Cold War, when, in 1947, the Central Intelligence Agency was created, the armed services were subordinated to a unified Department of Defense, and the National Security Council (to which the CIA was to report) was created as a centralized national security policy organization. The

[5]Either for this reason, or because Democratic congressional majorities have no interest in highlighting these types of issues while a Democrat is in the White House, interest in this reform agenda died out after 1992.

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main theme of this reform agenda has been increased centralization of the intelligence community in the name of efficiency and objectivity. In this regard, the agenda mirrors the major changes in the Defense Department, from its beginning in 1947 through the Goldwater-Nichols Act of 1986, which represent a consistent effort to strengthen the "central" bureaucracies—the Office of the Secretary of Defense, the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff and the Joint Staff, and the heads of the "unified" commands—at the expense of the services.[6]

While centralization might promote efficiency in public administration textbooks (at least ones of the older kind), it is less obvious that it always does so in practice. Certain types of duplication may indeed be wasteful; but with respect to major issues a certain amount of what goes by the name of "competitive analysis" is probably a good idea. Bringing to bear the differing perspectives of, say, the State and Defense departments is prudent, given that the cost of becoming captive to a particular strain of conventional wisdom can be so high. Again, different parts of government have differing intelligence requirements and the various formal processes for compiling these requirements are often too crude to capture all the nuances. Thus, having some collection capability under the control of policymakers with specific needs, such as the military, is likely to make the resulting intelligence more relevant and useful, even if it is not as bureaucratically tidy. In general, centralization moves the locus of the intelligence effort further and further away from the policymakers who make use of the product. To be useful, the intelligence output has to be produced with the policymakers' needs clearly in mind. Often, the most effective interchange occurs not by means of the written report but in the course of briefings and meetings in which the policymakers can ask questions, distinguish between what is known and what is only surmised, probe analytic assumptions, begin to understand what types of information can be collected and what types are unlikely to be, and gain an appreciation of the timing and credibility of the likely warning that can be expected prior to a major change in the situation. This type of responsiveness is more likely to be forthcoming from an intelligence agency bureaucratically close to its customers than from a distant one.

From this perspective, Senator David Boren's ambition of creating a "world-class think tank" at Langley is misplaced. As suggested above, this drive for centralization has a rather old-fashioned ring to it, as if one wished to create an automobile company on Henry Ford's model of mass production rather than on Toyota's leaner methods. Indeed, current business literature emphasizes that a successful corporate "intelligence" office must be located close to the senior policymakers, rather than isolated from them.

Alongside the argument for efficiency, an additional reason is given for centralization: a "central" intelligence agency would be free of the biases of one that was part of a government department (such as State or Defense) and therefore led to "cook" its results to support its parent organization's policy or budgetary preferences. Historically, much of this debate concerning the objectivity of intelligence derived from the difficult question (especially in the pre-satellite 1950s) of estimating Soviet military capabilities. Major debates centered on this question—the "Bomber Gap" and "Missile Gap" issues—had important consequences for the defense budget; the Central Intelligence Agency saw itself as an important corrective to military intelligence organizations, which might have an institutional motive for overestimating the Soviet threat.

While objectivity is an important goal for any intelligence organization, it is unfortunately much more difficult to attain than

[6]When the 1992 bills were introduced, one Senate staffer was reported as saying that the intelligence community was marked by "structural fragmentation...If the Joint Chiefs needed reform, intelligence needs it twice as badly."

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the traditional argument for a central intelligence agency suggests. First, the absence of policy or budgetary preferences on the part of an organization does not guarantee the absence of ulterior motives. In the above example, the CIA acquired a bureaucratic interest in portraying military estimates of Soviet military capabilities as excessive: if they weren't, then no corrective to them was needed, and the CIA's role in this area could be constrained. Similarly, strategic arms control, with its major requirement for verification of detailed treaty provisions, enhanced the CIA's role in this area.

Second, and more generally, any bureaucracy can acquire, over time, a set of beliefs about important issues—an institutional "conventional wisdom"—that it then has a bureaucratic interest in preserving and defending, and which distinguishes it from some other bureaucracy. Thus, for many years in the 1960s and early 1970s, the CIA held to the view that the Soviet Union had come to accept many of the American assumptions about strategic nuclear weapons that underlay the doctrine of mutual assured destruction.

Third, the absence of a tie to departmental policymakers does not, and cannot, mean independence: intelligence always works for, and is subordinate to, some policymaker. Consider, for example, the recent debate over the intelligence community's negative assessment of Haitian President Jean Bertrand Aristide's personality: one angry Democratic lawmaker was quoted as saying that the CIA should remember who won the 1992 election. Insofar as this legislator was saying that the CIA works for the president, he was of course right. But he was wrong not to realize that the CIA serves the president best when it "tells it like it is," not like the president wants it to be. The safeguard for objectivity cannot be sought in independence—backbone will always be necessary.

Finally, the entire issue of independence is often confused because few realize just how speculative are most of the analytic products about which the claims of "cooking the books" tend to swirl. (The issue almost never arises with respect to hard fact or raw data—and, when it does, it relates to questions of delaying or constraining the circulation, not its alteration.) Debate arises around those conclusions of intelligence analysis which are, well, most debatable.

Intelligence analysts will claim that any refusal to accept their conclusions results from the policymaker's stubborn or politically-motivated attachment to his own policies or views, and, in some cases, they may be right. But, in others, the policymaker may be reasonably relying on his or her own knowledge of the area and contacts with foreign diplomats and leaders and other experts. A diplomat who has had extensive dealings with Aristide, for example, may feel that his own judgments have as much validity as those of an intelligence analyst who has never met the man. He may not be right, but he is not being unreasonable if he rejects the observations of others (even if they are labeled "sources") in favor of his own.[7]

Thus, the question of objectivity and bias is much more complicated than it might appear at first glance. A truly open mind is a difficult thing to have and retain under any circumstances, and mere bureaucratic arrangements cannot guarantee it. Nor can they guarantee the backbone necessary to stick to one's guns under pressure. The most that one can hope to do, in terms of bureaucratic arrangements, is to identify the most common or characteristic failings of an organization, and take institutional

[7]Of course, if he rejected hard evidence, he would be acting irrationally—a difficulty policymakers often face, however, is in determining whether an intelligence analysis with which they disagree reflects the analyst's possession of evidence of which they are unaware, or represents a differing assessment of the facts as they are known to all.

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measures designed to correct or at least ameliorate them.

In the case of the national security bureaucracy, the most characteristic failing seems to be the bowing to the power of "conventional wisdom." To some extent, bureaucracies worldwide are subject to this illness; achieving consensus in a bureaucracy—inducing all the relevant parties to "sign off" on an assessment or judgment—is such a laborious task that it is not surprising that, once such a consensus has been achieved, there is a strong incentive not to revisit an issue unless changed circumstances make it essential. In the United States, however, there is an additional incentive: government service, below the very top levels, is not particularly prestigious. Those engaged in it who have any intellectual pretensions do not wish to be seen as "neanderthal" or "out of it" by those in the much more prestigious realms of academia or the mainstream, national-level media. This tends to reinforce a tendency toward the conventional wisdom; it is distressing how often highly classified assessments of political issues closely resemble op-ed pieces. For this reason, "competitive analysis" (i.e., the existence of different centers of intelligence analysis) is a necessary corrective, regardless of how inefficient it might seem in terms of public administration theory.

New Age Intelligence

ANOTHER PART OF the reform agenda that was taken up in the 1992 bills was an emphasis on "open source" collection—the exploitation of newspaper and magazine articles, radio and television broadcasts, and other publicly available sources of information—as opposed to more traditional "human intelligence collection."[8] Again, this was presented as a reaction to the end of the Cold War, although the same theme was prominent in various reform attempts during the Cold War as well.

In fact, some of the impetus behind this idea came from the difficulty of conducting espionage in the Soviet Union, given the closed nature of its society and its suspicious and all-pervasive counterintelligence culture. Topics such as intra-elite politics, which in other regimes could be learned about by means of espionage, had to be approached indirectly. One of the means of doing this was "Kremlinology," the discipline of deducing the ins and outs of Kremlin politics from the minor hints that surfaced, from time to time, in the open press. Thus, when secret police chief Lavrenti Beria was omitted from list of Politburo members attending the opera, the conclusion to be drawn was not that he didn't like opera; but rather, he was on the way out. Although the clever use of open sources remains an important and cost-effective way of getting at otherwise hidden information, it is arguably of less importance in the post-Cold War world, in which many of our intelligence targets, as noted earlier, are much more vulnerable to traditional espionage than was the old Soviet Union.

Finally, the reform agenda, especially the call for a "world-class think tank," derives in part from the view that, in the post-Cold War world, there will be a whole list of new topics for the intelligence community to concern itself with: environmental concerns, economic competitiveness, demographic issues such as refugee flows and epidemics, and so forth. Thus, there will be a need for experts on a whole range of new topics, aside from the traditional ones, such as military, diplomatic, and political affairs.

No one who has worked in the execu-

[8]Senator Boren emphasizes the importance of human source intelligence but redefines it to mean "people who understand public opinion and mass movements in those areas of the world where power has become much more decentralized. We will need more economists and business school graduates who understand commercial competition..." "The Intelligence Community," (*Foreign Affairs*, Summer 1992), pp. 55-56.

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tive branch of the U.S. government is likely to oppose the notion that it could use better (and more convenient) sources of information on a wide variety of topics. But the question remains: why should this plea for a more effective government information system be addressed to the intelligence community, rather than any other organization or organizations? (For that matter, why not consider the creation of a new organization, an executive branch counterpart to the Congressional Research Service of the Library of Congress?) In most nations, the notion that the intelligence service should provide information on the climatic and other effects of ozone depletion would seem rather strange.

Part of the reason why it doesn't in this country lies in the historical accident that, during World War II, the Office of Strategic Services (OSS, the CIA's predecessor and prototype) became the government agency that was most intellectually sophisticated. In what must have seemed, to paraphrase the New Testament, a scandal to the armed forces and foolishness to the State Department, "Wild Bill" Donovan, head of the OSS, recruited large numbers of historians, social scientists and other professors and intellectuals to work in the service's Research and Analysis Branch. These researchers discovered that the answers to a lot of important questions could be found in the Library of Congress; for example, an old travel book might contain a picture of North Africa Beach that planners of an amphibious assault would find useful. Similarly, systematic analysis of German domestic propaganda provided clues to the thinking of the leadership, their assessment of the situation and even, on occasion, their plans for the future. Studies of the pre-war German economy, to say nothing of detailed technical works on its railroad system, all provided hints for those trying to determine the most profitable targets for the strategic bombing campaign. The OSS researchers demonstrated that, when subjected to careful and sophisticated analysis, open source information could provide clues to information that, during wartime, at least, was considered secret and withheld from publication.

The Soviet Union, the main post-World War II intelligence target, operated as if it were at war. Information that other states routinely published, such as accurate maps or the size and breakdown of the defense budget, was withheld or distorted. Thus, many of the same techniques developed by OSS analysts during World War II could be carried over to the study of the Soviet Union; additional ones, such as Kremlinology, were invented specifically for the purpose.

Consequently, the CIA became responsible for determining a whole range of information about the Soviet Union with which, under more ordinary circumstances, an intelligence agency might not be involved. For example, one of the biggest and nastiest intra-intelligence community debates of the 1970s focused on the size of the actual Soviet defense budget, and the percentage of Soviet GNP that it represented. In this way the intelligence community in the United States became seen as the government's general information service, rather than as that part of the government that deals specifically with secrets—protecting our own and discovering those of others. The current "new age" agenda that is being proposed for the intelligence community merely builds on that perception. But there are good reasons for thinking that the intelligence community is not the best locus for much of this work.

Because so much of the intelligence community's work will have to remain secret in any case, the reform agenda has the effect of imposing many of the burdens of secrecy—security clearances for personnel, special communications and information handling facilities, physical security of office space, and so forth—on work and workers that have no real need for it. It also hampers the ability

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of analysts to reach out to those elements of society—academia, other non-profit organizations, business, and the media—that have expertise on a given topic. Aside from security considerations, it remains a reality—unreasonable as it may be—that intelligence still carries something of a stigma, especially in many of these circles. A professor who would expect to be praised for landing a contract with an outside research center, thereby bringing new resources to the campus, may well feel that getting involved with the CIA could have untoward consequences that would be imprudent to risk.

Furthermore, the differing nature of government involvement in these issues, and the different types of expertise required, suggest that the proper structure of an organization for studying them should be determined on a case-by-case basis. If, for example, the United States government decides more work should be done on tracking epidemics on a global basis, it would make sense to assign that task to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention in Atlanta; trying to duplicate that medical expertise in Langley would be wasteful. Again, the appropriate group for analyzing international economic competitiveness might be a planning group in the Department of Commerce or Treasury, which could be close enough to the policymakers to understand what kind of information and analysis would be useful to support the specific policy tools at their disposal; a group of economists operating independently might come up with a brilliant analysis that was irrelevant to the (rather limited) ways in which policymakers could deal with this particular issue.

Less Is More

THIS BROADENING OF the focus of intelligence work also dilutes the key competitive advantage that the intelligence community enjoys, which is in dealing with secrets. Given the small role likely to be played by secret information, there is, for example, no reason to expect a mid-level intelligence analyst to outperform a Wall Street analyst when the subject is the economics of the world automobile industry. On the contrary, given that a Wall Street firm is likely to pay an analyst from five to ten times the salary the CIA can offer, it should be able—in general—to obtain higher quality results. What is needed is some way for the government (which, after all, is not in competition with the brokerage firm) to obtain and exploit the results of the analysis undertaken for other purposes. This can probably be done more easily if the government representative doesn't bear the burden of somehow representing the Intelligence Community. In any case, the government's point of contact for this work should be as close to the relevant policymakers as possible, i.e., the officials in the Commerce Department who deal with issues concerning the auto industry, rather than analysts in a "world-class think tank" who have to go through multiple levels of bureaucracy in order to transmit a memorandum to those who are able to make use of it.

But perhaps most important, this focus tends to blur the very characteristic that makes intelligence work distinctive from any other kind of intellectual activity. At its core, it is the attempt to get at certain kinds of information—secrets—to which an adversary is deliberately trying to deny access. An intelligence analyst has to be alert to the possibility that the raw data he is relying on may not only be false (that can happen to any researcher) but is being deliberately distorted in order to mislead him. By ignoring the "spy versus spy" aspect of intelligence work—the fact that the intelligence analyst, as well as the spy, is working against a human adversary who is trying to mislead or thwart him—one paves the way for counterintelligence disasters.

Instead of pursuing the Cold War reform agenda of broadening the intelligence community into a universal information service for the government, we should be

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attempting to restore a more narrowly-focused intelligence agency with a revived human intelligence capability. Such an agency could help us navigate in the confused waters of the post-Cold War world, where a few well-placed agents in the Somali militias or the Haitian military and business worlds could help us avoid embarrassing and potentially costly disasters. The opportunities for useful human intelligence collection have not been greater in half a century.

Will we be able, however, to exploit them? One way of making use of these opportunities would be to expand the ways in which our clandestine human intelligence operates. In the course of the Cold War, it may have made sense to disguise most of our case officers as diplomatic personnel in American embassies abroad, where they could easily come into contact with their Soviet counterparts, who were their main targets. Now we may find, for example, that it is more important to understand the internal dynamics of a Third World nation's military establishment. If so, since it is military attachés, military advisers and security assistance officers who are most likely to come into contact with another country's military officers, the expansion (and professionalization) of military human intelligence collection capabilities would seem to be indicated.

One of Parkinson's laws is that, by the time a bureaucratic organization gets a fancy new headquarters building, it is well past its prime. By that standard, the CIA's salad days were when it was still located in ugly World War II-era temporary structures in downtown Washington. The move to its 1950s-modern Langley headquarters was an ominous sign. That, however, was nothing compared to the recent additions to the headquarters complex, complete with a glass-covered atrium that any suburban hotel or shopping mall would be proud of.

Reasoning in somewhat the same manner, Senator Daniel Patrick Moynihan suggested several years ago the abolition of the Central Intelligence Agency and the distribution to other organizations of its component parts. A diminished human intelligence capability, which he considered might perhaps not be necessary at all, would be transferred to the Department of State. For various reasons, this is unlikely to happen. Nevertheless, the underlying instinct might well be sound.

A separate human intelligence organization could be the best way to proceed. Since its founding would be in part in reaction to the Ames case, it might be bereft of the anti-counterintelligence bias that has come to exist in the CIA. (Never underestimate the power of an organization's founding myth—even now, reference is often made to Pearl Harbor to justify the need for central intelligence.) Such an organization could exploit the opportunities of the post-Cold War world and provide assistance in dealing with the myriad of crises in which, even in the absence of a global rival, we still find ourselves entangled. □

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Jesus James Angleton: An All-Purpose Excuse

On December 5, 1990, the CIA's Counterintelligence Center, where Aldrich Ames was assigned at the time, sent a memo to the Office of Security requesting a reinvestigation of him. The memo listed several suspicious facts: Ames' purchase of a house for $540,000 in cash, and its expensive redecoration and renovation, the purchase of a Jaguar for $49,500, and various large bank transactions. The memorandum notes that there is "a degree of urgency" in the request since the CIC had been limiting Ames' access to sensitive information, but it was "quickly running out of things for him to do without granting him greater access."

The degree of urgency may be surmised from the government's "Statement of Facts" submitted in connection with the plea bargain. Just twelve days after the CIC's memo was sent, according to this statement, "Ames obtained valuable intelligence information regarding a KGB officer cooperating with the CIA. Ames prepared a letter...advising the KGB of this information...." It is not clear whether Ames obtained this information officially or through corridor gossip.

In either case, the CIA's lack of a "counterintelligence mentality" is striking. Either the CIC provided Ames access to sensitive information just days after expressing serious concerns about his reliability, or the general atmosphere at Langley was such that this type of information was passed around via corridor gossip regardless of "need to know."

Faced with this kind of record, Director of Central Intelligence James Woolsey, in a speech designed to rebut Ames-related criticism, resorted to the CIA's all-purpose excuse: James Jesus Angleton, the agency's leading mole-hunter, whose search for traitors had paralyzed the CIA during the height of the Cold War. Despite the fact that Angleton had been sacked almost twenty years earlier, Woolsey claimed that, even in 1994, the CIA's "culture with respect to security and counterintelligence" should be viewed in the light of "a reaction against the highly centralized management of counterintelligence in the Fifties, Sixties, and early Seventies." Woolsey claimed that he wants to change this culture—the operations directorate, he said, cannot "function as a fraternity...whereby once you are initiated, you're considered a trusted member for life." But he concluded that section of his speech with the hyperbolic warning, "We all at the CIA want to continue to serve in today's Virginia, not in seventeenth-century Salem." (One would have thought that an organization addicted to the polygraph exam—which Ames passed in 1986 and 1991—would be more understanding of the kinds of evidence presented in witchcraft trials.)

But neither Woolsey's reference to Salem nor the Ames case itself should lead one to believe that the CIA is not vigilant when it comes to the behavior of its personnel. For example, it recently referred to the Department of Justice for possible prosecution the serious matter of a female officer who claimed overtime pay for the hours spent preparing a Thanksgiving dinner for a clandestine human intelligence source. The agent in question was not charged with witchcraft, however, but with the somewhat more modern female misdeed of making "some men believe she might make a pass" at them.

However, it seems that this officer's real offense was that she charged several of her subordinates with misconduct ranging from drunkenness to spousal abuse. For, despite what Woolsey said, the fraternity analogy is not a bad one for understanding the CIA's operations directorate. Like any club, it wants to overlook its members' faults for the sake of maintaining good relations among them. What it tends not to overlook, however, is a member threatening good fellowship by making an issue of another member's behavior.

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On Reading My Stasi Files

Frederic L. Pryor

AFTER THE FALL of the Berlin Wall and the political reunification of Germany, the new all-German government made the extraordinary decision to open most of the files of the East German secret police, nicknamed the Stasi. Some of the files had been removed by the Stasi before the communist government fell; some disappeared during the confusion occurring at the time of the reunification; and some of the files were deliberately destroyed or withheld by the new government. But in my case, five thousand pages of file materials were intact and the gaps were relatively minor. For the most part, therefore, I was able to find out what actually happened in the half year that I sat in the Stasi Investigation Prison Hohenschönhausen on suspicion of espionage.

From 1959 through 1961 I lived in West Berlin, writing my doctoral dissertation for Yale University on the foreign trade system of the Soviet bloc, using East Germany as a case study. In the course of my research, I conducted about thirty-five interviews in East Berlin, primarily about planning and decision-making in foreign trade. I also asked questions about the price-setting process for trade with other communist nations and, to place my research in perspective, about the East German economy in general. I consulted various libraries in East Berlin and read materials unavailable in the West.

On the night of August 25, 1961—almost two weeks after work began on the Berlin Wall—I went over to East Berlin to hear a speech by Walter Ulbricht, the head of the Communist Party, to learn how he justified this action. Afterwards, I tried to visit the home of a woman who was an engineer and economist who had been helping me to compare textile firms in East and West Germany. This was one of several small research projects I began after completing the dissertation and before I was to report for a job in Pakistan in November. The East-West political situation had become tense, so I wanted to cancel our joint project and say goodbye to her. Unfortunately, the Stasi had staked out her apartment because—unknown to me—she had fled to the West a few days before. Originally, the police thought I was coming to pick up her personal effects; they arrested me on suspicion of assisting her escape.

Although the Stasi had little in their files about me, within days they had a relatively good idea of my activities and, at that point, I was charged with espionage. The order for my incarceration was issued two weeks after I was initially arrested—and about a week later than the East German law required such orders to be made. Such legal niceties, however, made little difference to the Stasi.

The Stasi was responsible both for espionage externally and for counterintelli-

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gence work internally. Other organizations carried out regular police and security work. It was a formidable bureaucracy that even had its own language; to allow me to understand what I read in my Stasi file, the specialist who handled my case gave me a list of over twenty pages of abbreviations used in the reports. By the end of the 1980s the Stasi had about 100,000 full time workers; and, in addition, roughly another 250,000 "informal co-workers," who submitted reports on various people or topics of interest to them. This means there was one full-time or informal co-worker of the Stasi for every thirty-eight adults in East Germany. According to one specialist, if laid end to end, the Stasi's files would stretch ninety-four miles.

In relative size, the former East Germany—officially, the German Democratic Republic—appears to have had the largest secret police organization yet known in history. By way of contrast, the Nazi secret police, the Gestapo, had only about 55,000 full-time workers for a population three times larger than that of the GDR. As for the Soviet Union, I was once told by Colonel Orlov, who was the highest ranking Soviet secret police officer to escape to the West, that his organization had only 50,000 full-time workers at the time of the purges in 1937 and 1938. He was not, let me add, a completely reliable source of information.

TWO YEARS AGO I applied to the German government to see my file, in order to find out exactly what the Stasi thought I was doing. After a delay of a year and a half permission was finally given. The files included my dissertation, a copy of which the police found in my car, as well as a first-rate German translation made while I was incarcerated. It also had the reports from five months of daily interrogations; the interrogation reports of those whom I had interviewed or knew on a personal basis in East Berlin; reports about each of the seventy-two pieces of paper found in my car, in my wallet, or on my person; and a full transcript of the entire "private conversation" between my lawyer and me that took place in prison shortly before my release. Of greatest interest, I also found more than 350 pages of handwritten reports about me from my cell mate, written every day while I was being interrogated.

After a few hours of reading my files, I began to experience many of the fears that I had during my interrogation: a general anxiety, a fear that I might have hurt other people, and a hopelessness. I felt again what it was like in my cell, and the efforts I took to maintain some type of mental equilibrium—for instance, trying to remember everyone in my third grade class. In that reading room I began to have difficulties in maintaining my objectivity and I had to remind myself that thirty-one years had passed since these events took place.

The Stasi was preparing a legal document to be used against me at a trial, and the reports did not indulge in a great deal of speculation or hysterical accusations. Rather, most of these materials were factual and sober, especially since I had technically broken their espionage laws by reading doctoral and masters theses that had been declared secret. Indeed, the proof was in my dissertation where these theses were carefully cited.

By way of contrast, the reports of my cell mate were much more speculative. During my imprisonment I had no doubt that he was reporting something to them about me. But his reports show him to have been a very active member of my investigation. It was clear that he had read not only all of the interrogation reports but also outside materials relevant to my case, as well as informal notes of the interrogator about matters that were not incorporated into the formal interrogation report. Although I never discussed my case with him, he included all of these details into his own reports in a manner which suggested that I had spoken to him about such matters. In his reports he even suggested questions for the interrogator to ask me.

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From my files it appears that the Stasi used three tactics with me. First, my interrogation officer repeatedly told me that I would remain in Investigation Prison until I confessed, and that I would be unable to contact the American Embassy, my lawyer, or my family. Such isolation, of course, was stressful. One reads that many made false confessions simply to come to trial and thence to a regular prison so that they could begin to have contact with their families again. Those who did not confess often stayed in Investigation Prison for periods longer than a year and, when they finally came to trial, were given extra long sentences because they showed "no regret for their crimes." Naturally, those who did confess were convicted, even if they repudiated their confession during their trial.

Second, my interrogator tried to convince me that he knew everything about my activities. Since I had spoken to my cell mate about my West Berlin girl friend, Helga, in whom I was seriously interested, my cell mate reported that he often discussed her with me. His notes make it clear that he attempted to awake in me the suspicion she had delivered reports about me to the Stasi.

Third, my interrogator tried to obtain a completely consistent story on every detail, no matter how trivial. Most importantly, he questioned me closely about each contact I had with East German citizens, carefully comparing my answers with the interrogation reports of each of these individuals to detect contradictions and lies. In this respect I quickly realized that since I had nothing to hide, it was best to be completely candid about these interviews and, as a result, no difficulties arose from discrepancies. But the thrust for total consistency led to weeks of interrogation about each piece of paper found on me. For instance, he placed enormous emphasis on understanding one line on my Yale University library card that said "Special student, only room 413." After five days I finally realized that in my last semester at the university I had not paid my tuition on time and, as a result, was permitted only to use the Economics Study Room of the library—Room 413. Then he moved on to questions about notes on other scraps of paper. Other former prisoners have told me or have written of the days of interrogation spent on the smallest details. These were not the interrogation scenes out of Arthur Koestler's *Darkness at Noon*, where the prisoner and his interrogator spoke of Dostoevski; this was a prison run by bureaucrats, not philosophers.

It was the attempt to awaken suspicions in me about Helga that had the most lasting effect. Even before I was arrested, I had been troubled by something in her character that I could not articulate. I knew, of course, that if she had actually made such reports and had been truthful, she could not have harmed me. But these lingering doubts destroyed my relationship with her after I was released, because I simply could not bring myself to trust her.

Such a tactic was undoubtedly even more effective for the Stasi when they dealt with East German citizens, since these people were immersed in a society in which anyone could be denouncing them or submitting reports about them. It seems clear to me that the constant need for watchfulness and the paranoia was the most debilitating aspect of everyday life in the GDR, morally more disturbing than the material difficulties arising from the constant economic shortages or the difficulties of traveling to the West.

I have always been ashamed that I could not allay my suspicions about Helga after I was released. Recently I have learned that such a tactic also had a lasting effect on others. In her book about her years in East German prisons, for instance, Ellen Thiemann writes that the common criminals had much more trust in each other than did the political prisoners. Only the latter had experienced many months of Stasi interrogation.

The Stasi treatment of prisoners was relatively individualized and they did not use

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certain tactics on me that they used with many other prisoners, such as bullying and yelling, sleep deprivation, drugs, or bribes. One note in my files suggested that they experimented with sleep deprivation by turning on the lights every five minutes while I slept. I was such a heavy sleeper that this did not bother me, and this experiment ceased. On the other hand, I have heard of no other prisoners with a full-time informer in the cell; most of the political prisoners were in solitary confinement. Apparently they felt my case was special.

BUT WHAT EXACTLY did the Stasi think that I was really doing, other than carrying out my research? At the time of my incarceration I never knew. From the files it was clear that very quickly my cell mate latched onto the idea that I was collecting information for the preparation of a foreign trade blockade of the GDR, after that country signed a peace agreement with the Soviet Union. My official interrogator, however, never directly questioned me about this or any related matter and it is unclear what he thought I was doing. But in his frequent discussion of this topic my cell mate's reports were a perfect example of crack-pot realism. Once he had this "insight," he tried to fit everything into its framework, even when he had to distort the information at hand. In reading his reports I began to wonder whether he was the head of the investigation, rather than the interrogator. In any case, he was no ordinary stool-pigeon, and there was an important division of labor between my interrogator and him, each supporting the work of the other.

Sometimes this working relation between my cell mate and interrogator worked to my advantage. Potentially, the most difficult part of my interrogation came from a curious source. An American woman in West Berlin whom I had apparently once met was arrested and told the Stasi that it was well known among the American students in Berlin that I worked for the CIA. She even identified my picture, probably because it appeared in a West Berlin newspaper after my arrest. I told them truthfully that I could not remember meeting her; and, although they gave me all sorts of hints about which of the three pictures they gave me to identify was hers, I could not pick her out. Since they knew my memory for faces was poor—I could not even identify the picture of a man whom I had interviewed several times—I was forced to spend half a day puzzling over the identification pictures. It gradually became clear to the Stasi that she was incriminating everyone in order to save her own skin, and I had no further difficulties on her account. Contributing to their decision might have been the report of my cell mate, who wrote that I was quite amused by this effort to establish a connection and did not take it seriously. I never suspected that she claimed to know me and had denounced me.

These interrogation reports had several curious aspects. For instance, some of those whom I had interviewed expressed surprise to the Stasi that, although I was writing a dissertation on foreign trade, I asked questions about a variety of aspects of the economy they deemed irrelevant to foreign trade planning; a broad approach toward a research topic was apparently unfamiliar to them. My interview partners also did not seem particularly bothered that I inadvertently asked about state secrets since, of course, I could not exactly know I was asking impermissible questions. What was a state secret was a state secret.

Several seemed fascinated with the stationary that I used to write for appointments: two or three commented on its size, or the letterhead. I don't remember what kind of stationary I used since I never paid much attention to such matters, but this is one example among many of the multitude of trivial details in which the Stasi had an interest. One person whom I interviewed even commented to them about my "good manners." The fact that the Stasi recorded this in their interrogation report—they usu-

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ally rewrote the replies to their questions in a way that focused only on the important details—suggests that they found this aspect of me particularly significant and perhaps dangerous.

Some technical aspects of the Stasi reports are bizarre. For instance, the interrogation reports never mentioned the name of Walter Ulbricht, despite the fact I was arrested after hearing his speech and had previously analyzed some of his speeches, as I had told them. Rather, they always referred to him reverently as the Chairman of the State Council, a practice reminiscent of certain religious groups, who never directly write the name of God. I also learned the reason why I did not receive the food package for Christmas that my parents sent me: the Stasi used it all up in analyzing everything chemically, spectrographically, and chromographically to detect poison. The Stasi also never delivered to me several letters that my parents had sent.

MY PURPOSE IN reading these files was to come to terms with my past, and I had no intention of denouncing anyone who might have supplied damaging materials about me to the Stasi. Nevertheless, I was comforted to find no evidence that would lead me to believe Helga had provided any such information. Moreover, it was also heartening to learn that, with the exception of my cell mate, all of the people whom I knew in East Berlin were quite fair about me. They could well have twisted things to make it easier for themselves; in this respect my experience was quite different from those of others who have found damaging and quite untrue reports about themselves from acquaintances and apparent friends.

But my greatest relief was that my contacts with various East Germans did not lead to great problems for them, something that had been on my conscience for three decades. Of course, I could not contact them after my release to find out what happened to them, because that might have increased their difficulties. One young woman, a medical student in East Berlin, had a particularly serious problem in explaining her relationship with me to the Stasi. She had never met an American before and considered me rather exotic, as well as a good source of information about the West. I, in turn, learned much about conditions in East Germany from her. We had nothing more than a casual friendship and, during our seven or eight dates, spend most of our time talking and learning more about life on the other side of the Iron Curtain. She finally asked me not to see her again because she feared the Stasi, and I, of course, agreed. In her interrogation, however, she could not explain this to the Stasi without bringing difficulties to herself. Instead, she told them that we broke up because she just wanted to be "good comrades," while I wanted to seduce her. I was interrogated about her for three days until I finally realized what she had told them about our break-up, at which time I "confessed" to them that I had sexual intentions toward her. Since our interrogation reports now agreed, the interrogator moved on to different topics. It appears she was allowed to continue her studies.

At the time of my arrest, my closest contact in East Germany was a professor at the College of Planning. When I telephoned him during my current visit to Berlin, he sounded genuinely happy to hear from me and invited me to coffee. Since my file designated three of the ten professors at his college with whom I had contact as informal coworkers of the Stasi, I offered to tell him their names. At first, he showed no interest, even though he himself had run into some severe political difficulties later in his career and was forbidden to publish any scholarly articles. But curiosity got the better of him and he finally asked about them. After I supplied their names, he and his wife expressed more surprise than resentment. They understood full well how people could feel forced to make such reports in order to retain their

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jobs or to make it possible for their children to study at the university. And, of course, once people started writing such reports to the Stasi, they were trapped and could not turn back.

ON FEBRUARY 10, 1962, the East German attorney general issued an order for me to be released. Although technically I had broken their espionage laws, he stated in his memorandum that my transgressions were minor. He wrote that since my activities did not hurt the German Democratic Republic, there was no further need to pursue my case. I have not yet learned how he arrived at this conclusion, but certainly a reading of my dissertation showed nothing that would aid a foreign trade blockade.

The attorney general might have also been influenced by reports of my cell mate about my repeated discussions with him about the trial of Francis Gary Powers, and my declaration that I would commit suicide before allowing myself to be dragged before TV cameras for an open trial. After a while, my cell mate's reports reflected total boredom with what he described as my "Powers complex," but the message may have gotten through. Another contributing factor might have been the offer of a prominent West German businessman, with whom my father had spoken, to exhibit at the Leipzig Fair if I were freed.

I was not, however, actually released until almost a month later when, ironically, Powers and I were traded for the convicted Soviet spy Colonel Abel. By holding off my release for a month, the East Germans were apparently able to do favors for both the Soviets and the Americans at absolutely no cost to themselves, not to mention enjoying the benefit of a prestigious West German firm exhibiting at their trade fair. When they told me that I was about to be released, they also took away my belt and placed a Stasi officer in my cell to prevent any suicide; apparently my threats, relayed through my cell mate, were taken seriously.

I am not yet through reading the materials on my case, especially those that were not in the Stasi files but are in the archives of the attorney general. Because of gaps in the dates of the interrogation reports, particularly toward the end of the period, it is clear that some of my files are missing and it is doubtful that they will ever be found. I also made an application to obtain the addresses of my cell mate and my interrogator to obtain their side of the story. Although I was able to obtain the address of the latter, he was not willing to engage in an exchange of letters.

THE OPENING OF the files has created enormous emotional tensions for those who live in this part of Germany. Much bitterness has arisen, many friendships have been broken, and many have gone to considerable efforts to denounce those who betrayed them.

The opening has led to witch hunts against prominent East German figures. As a result, there have been considerable reversals of fortune, of which the most spectacular is the case of my lawyer, Wolfgang Vogel, who spent a number of months sitting in the Moabit Investigation Prison in West Berlin. Vogel is a thoroughly honest and courageous person and is not only the best known but also the wealthiest lawyer in the GDR. He was responsible for the release of about eighty thousand prisoners and others in East Germany, many of whom were ransomed by West Germany, others of whom were traded for those arrested in the West. He also received a hidden fee from the West German government for his help in these transactions.

Before being expelled, these prisoners for whom Vogel obtained a release had either to give away or sell their property at prices set by the government; otherwise, the GDR government would take over their possessions. Such transactions had, moreover, to occur within a few hours. Relying on a paragraph in the German law allowing former

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East Germans to get their property back if it had been extorted from them, fifty-six of those thousands of former East German prisoners for whom Vogel had bargained their freedom have recently accused him of having extorted their property. Vogel is also accused by the West German prosecutors of failing to pay taxes on his secret West German subsidy. In late 1994 he came to trial, and, as these lines are written, the judgment has not yet been rendered. His complicated and moving story is the subject of Craig Whitney's recent biography, *Spy Trader* (Random House: 1993).

My parents had engaged Vogel as my lawyer before he had started his prisoner exchange business, but I first met him only shortly before my release. I was on one side of the bars, he on the other. When I visited him recently during the time I was reading my Stasi files, our positions were reversed. Although he seemed to be able to bear up under the situation, I had a hard time maintaining my composure. He had been able to help me get out of prison in a totalitarian state; but now, I could not help him get out of prison in a democratic state. Indeed, his other character witnesses—many of the ex-prisoners whose freedom he had gained, including the well-known West German politicians Helmut Schmidt and Hans-Dietrich Genscher—appear equally unable to help him.

The specialist responsible for my files made me aware of one further irony after I expressed to her my anger that my lawyer was imprisoned, while people indicted of serious criminal activity were allowed their freedom during the investigation of their cases. I specifically mentioned the name of Alexander Schalck-Goldkowski, who headed the Stasi's smuggling operations and foreign exchange manipulations that provided an important source of finance for their activities. Allegedly he was also able to send many millions out of the country to Swiss bank accounts after the Wall had fallen. She pointed out that I had cited Schalck's master's thesis in my dissertation, one of the "secret documents" that I had read which brought me so much trouble, so that I was the first person to bring Schalck's name before a Western audience.

The cases of Schalck and Vogel raise a difficult question. To what extent should (and equally important, can) prominent East Germans now be legally punished, especially if they did not break the laws of their own country or violate basic human standards of justice? Erich Mielke, the former head of the Stasi, has been convicted of murder, but of a German policeman in 1931, not of the prisoners who died or were mishandled in the Stasi prisons under his responsibility. Schalck certainly violated Western laws in his complicated trade and foreign exchange transactions, but he did not violate the laws of his own nation. Unless the money he allegedly sent to Switzerland was embezzled, by what standards should he be judged? Although Marcus Wolf, who headed the Stasi foreign espionage division, has been found guilty of espionage against West Germany, he did not violate the laws of the country in which he lived. Equally difficult problems arise in the cases of those who played only a minor role in the system—for instance, the judges who handed down stiff sentences on the basis of confessions obtained by the Stasi. These judges acted in accordance with the laws of their state, and unless they gave long sentences for trivial political offenses that violate common standards of decency, of what are they guilty?

Up to now, most of those who have been seriously punished by the German courts since the Wall has fallen have been those like the soldiers guarding the Wall who acted under orders to shoot at people trying to escape. Others are people like Vogel, who, as a well-known person with the highest political connections, have been a convenient target of the suppressed fury of many who suffered from the East German dictatorship. Schalck, who operated in the shadows away from public attention, has not raised such wrath and has been treated more gently.

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Although I gained some interesting personal information from reading my file, from a public policy perspective does it make any sense to open them? Certainly no other former communist nation has done so. In fact, with the exception of Czechoslovakia, which requires a vetting of the secret police files by a committee before a person can occupy certain key posts in the government or the economy, all other nations have sealed the files, although in most countries there have been leaks to the press for political purposes—mainly by politicians trying to smear a rival. For instance, according to an alleged Polish secret police report that was leaked, even Lech Walesa was said to have supplied information to them. Of course, Walesa has denied the charge and there has been no verification. The Czech decision has also brought difficulties, since some of those named in the files as informal co-workers apparently never delivered any information; those making the files simply wanted to appear busier than they actually were. A particularly tragic case is Jan Kavan, a well-known dissident who cannot clear his name in court because he cannot read his file—only a committee is given this privilege.

The various post-communist governments have offered a variety of excuses for not opening up the secret police files: the files are in too great a disarray; there are not suitable personnel for the purpose; such a step would exacerbate existing social tensions. Perhaps an underlying worry of these governments is that almost all leading citizens had some contact with the secret police, often quite benign.

The political advantages for the government of Chancellor Helmut Kohl of opening the files seem, however, quite clear, as a brief recitation of some crucial political and economic events reveals. After the Wall came down in November 1989, Kohl spoke of a political union of the two parts of Germany. But it quickly became apparent that this would take five or ten years. In the early part of 1990 he suddenly changed tactics and spoke of an economic and monetary union instead. I was in Germany when he made the decision for a one-to-one exchange of East and West German deutschemarks, a decision he was advised against by a variety of economic experts, including the head of the Bundesbank.

Because productivity was much lower in the East than in the West and Eastern wages were not correspondingly as low, production costs after the one-to-one conversion would be higher in the East. This would, in turn, make competition with West German firms extremely difficult and, in a great many cases, would force them into bankruptcy. But a one-to-one exchange rate corresponded to the wishes of the East German citizenry, who did not quite understand how markets operated. Kohl bowed to their desires, a decision that raised the unemployment rate from about 3 percent to 30 percent in a matter of weeks and brought the East German economy rapidly to its knees. As a result, the political union followed quickly: Kohl accomplished in less than a year what political pundits had previously declared difficult to realize in five.

But such a strategy to achieve unification also brought enormous economic pain in the former East Germany and a strong possibility that his government would fall in a few years following reunification. By bowing to the wishes of the East German citizenry to open the Stasi files, Kohl tried to accomplish two important political goals to offset these difficulties. First, he thought he effectively eliminated all competition from East German politicians. Any East German of ability who had the desire to accomplish something in that country under communism had dealings with the Stasi, since the Stasi had practically unlimited power. As a result, no politician of any stature has been able to emerge in East Germany who has not been tainted by Stasi contacts. Even so decent a man as Lothar de Maiziere, who was East Germany's Prime Minister after its first

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free election in March 1990, was eventually driven from political life for this reason. In 1993 Kohl wanted the next president of Germany to come from the East, but he had a relatively limited choice because of the wide net of Stasi contacts. His first choice was Steffen Heitmann, a political nonentity who had a singular capacity to enrage a large segment of Germans whenever he opened his mouth. Heitmann withdrew his candidacy.

Second, opening the files also appeared, at least superficially, to reduce the possibility that the East German population would ever re-elect a communist government. Why it did this is best indicated by the now-fading slogan on a building: "Who votes for the [successor to the communist party] votes for the Stasi; and who votes for the Stasi votes for civil war." With the slow opening of the files, the evils of the Stasi would remain in the public eye for many years. According to this argument, the citizens of the former GDR would never follow the example of those in Lithuania, Hungary, Poland, Romania, and Bulgaria, not to mention a number of republics in the former USSR, who have elected former communist officials to head their nations.

The local elections in December 1993 in the state of Brandenburg cast some doubt on this argument: the Party of Democratic Socialism (PDS), the successor to the former communist party, received roughly the same number of votes as Kohl's Christian Democrats. Moreover, a known collaborator with the Stasi also received a large number of votes. Since that time, the PDS gained roughly the same percentage of votes in other state elections in the former East Germany, and in the fall elections of 1994 they gained thirty seats in the German parliament.

This helps explain, perhaps, why Chancellor Kohl has apparently experienced a change of heart and has recently been quoted as saying that the files "...are poisoning the whole atmosphere because no one knows how much of it is truth and how much is fantasy...we are not getting anything good out of them." Nevertheless, Kohl's current suggestion to close the Stasi files has been vigorously denounced, not just by naive citizens who believe the files will reveal all of the hidden "truth," but also by those who wish to understand their lives. An example is Vera Wollenberger, a current member of the German Parliament and a former East German dissident, who has been particularly articulate. She has learned from her Stasi file that her husband had informed on her for a number of years; she is said to be now trying to obtain additional materials from the files to determine whether the Stasi had commissioned him to marry her.

In the end, reading my Stasi file also made me wonder how much of our unknown past we should really know. Quite understandably, some East Germans have tried to use the materials in their files to rectify past injustices. Others wanted primarily to find out what lay behind those gales that had buffeted their lives, and they seemed ready to forgive those who had harmed them. But still others seem to have made a personal decision to leave the files alone. For many of these, it is perhaps easier to forget than to forgive. □

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Necessary Imperfections

Kenneth Minogue

Ernest Gellner, *Conditions of Liberty: Civil Society and Its Rivals* (New York: Allen Lane, Penguin Press, 1994), 225 pp., $27.95.

THERE SEEMS TO be no theory of why communism collapsed that does not send us scurrying back to take our own temperatures. Contemplating the post-communist world, we find ourselves falling into medical metaphors. After so long a political illness, what can it be that constitutes "health"? We cannot merely take our bearings from Europe and America. They are certainly vital and healthy in a number of striking respects when compared to the corruption and pollution of the communist world, yet every time we consider what would be communist regeneration, we seem to be driven to think of what would be ideal for us. Because others have been ill, our spiritual hypochondria seems to be getting worse. Certain ideals have been given a new lease of life by the collapse of communism and they threaten to give a whole new life to utopia.

Recovery from communism is currently understood in terms of three overlapping ideas. Democracy must have pride of place because a rot that began in politics must be corrected by a better way of governing. Democracy here includes the rule of law and the implementation of human rights, and it was these slogans that challenged the corrupt Party oligarchies of communism's last days. The second idea was that the market, with all that it involves, must replace the so-called "command economies" which have impoverished the East: capitalist abundance was what the peoples themselves thought they most needed. But both "market forces" and "capitalism" are unfortunate expressions. "Capitalism" is a recycled item of communist criticism of modern Western life. It retains the sense of something raw and selfish, badly in need of some political softening. "Market forces" has become a kind of demonic metaphysics, detached from its source in the things individuals choose to produce and consume, and feared as an alien power causing greed and the erosion of community. The Marxist theory of alienation has made a remarkable comeback by infiltrating our current vocabulary.

Both of these formulations have their supporters, but it is the idea of civil society which has swept the board. It stands for a plausible doctrine of social regeneration, to the effect that communism atomized society by politicization. Nothing moved in the Soviet Union unless the Party controlled it—nothing, that is, except for the criminality in which alone individual enterprise might flourish. The cure for this moral and political degradation must involve a comprehensive resurgence of the human spirit. No doubt democratic institutions must be established or restored, but the disease was more than merely political. No doubt a modern economy, with its plural centers of initiative, must be created. Neither of these things would be possible without the rule of law. But everyone

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knew that some additional element was needed to bind this new order together. The name for it has, very rapidly, come to be "civil society."

Ernest Gellner's *Conditions of Liberty*[1] is much the best treatment of civil society to emerge from this new situation. Gellner himself these days is in Prague much of the time, studying the process of regeneration from the inside. It is perhaps an advantage that the Czech Republic is the most vigorous patient in the ex-communist ward. Some Czechs can still remember what it was once like to be healthy. As a philosopher and anthropologist, however, Gellner has the notable advantage of being able to frame his study of civil society in terms of a comprehensive account of the modern world which he has been developing for many decades.[2]

He wants to persuade us above all that civil society is a most remarkable human achievement. The term refers to the modern Western state under the aspect of its social and economic vitality. It is less an idea than a complex institutional structure combining a very strong sovereign power on the one hand and a great amount of social freedom and independence on the other. But it is above all a moral fact, a complex set of attitudes including mutual trust between the members of society as a whole, which allows Europeans and Americans to be fluent creators of social institutions, including economic enterprises. This moral fact has developed over many generations and depends upon social and political conditions: a strong but limited government and a widespread aversion to overarching monopolies.[3]

The problem is that strong governments are seldom content to allow people to get on with their own lives. Sometimes, as in Gellner's favorite example of the Islamic community, they seek to create a perfect community living according to some specific blueprint for life, something called an *umma*, which Gellner uses as a technical term. Communism was an *umma* that proved unworkable. Alternatively conquerors exploit the enterprise of the subjects and reduce them to a servile condition.

It is not unknown, however, for whole societies to escape exploitative conquerors and to live with a high degree of independence from central control. It does not follow that they achieve freedom. The individual is most likely to find himself coerced by suffocating forms of required social cohesion, as in the Maghrebian societies Gellner has studied as an anthropologist. Modern Western states have emerged, precariously, from a remarkable conjunction of circumstances which have bypassed this fatal fork—either the political constriction of despotism, or the social constriction of closed communities—in human development. Civil society was born out of the Protestant reformation: diverse forms of religious enthusiasm created the counter balance of a strong and relatively neutral state. The philosophers of the eighteenth-century Scottish Enlightenment spent a lot of time figuring this thing out, and Gellner thinks that in the end they just about got it right. His argument is

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[1]Gellner tells us on p. 213 that his subtitle is an allusion to Karl Popper's *Open Society and its Enemies.*

[2]See, particularly, *Thought and Change* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1964); *Legitimation of Belief* (London: Cambridge University Press, 1974); *Nations and Nationalism* (London: Cornell University Press, 1983); and *Reason and Culture* (Oxford: Basil and Blackwell, 1992).

[3]For a good account of this particular feature of civil society, see "The Political Economy of Freedom" in Michael Oakeshott, *Rationalism in Politics*, new edition edited by Timothy Fuller, (Indianapolis: Liberty Press, 1991).

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far too complex and subtle to be easily summarized, but one can taste its flavor when he remarks that civil society

> presupposed a political stalemate between practitioners of superstition and the zealots of enthusiasm, such as in fact did occur in seventeenth-century England, leading to a compromise. This allowed a diminished, sliding-scale ritualism and mediation at the centre, and a privatized *Umma* at home, among the minoritarian enthusiasts who turned to the economy rather than a *jihad*.

Gellner is a philosopher, but his explanation of modernity is in terms less of ideas than of interests and structures. Ideas do make an appearance, but only as they explain social structures. This is a point to which I shall return.

The First World is, then, democratic and economically free and prosperous, but what underlies this happy condition is (as Gellner tells it) the unique historical accident which has made its member states also civil societies. It was the Scottish philosophers who first theorized this new and central feature of the modern world, and especially that part of it which came to be called "the economy," but it was the German philosopher Hegel who raised it to the level of a philosophical theory and used it to explain one vital aspect among the things that made Western civilization unique: civil society was the first society to dispense with serfdom and slavery. As Hegel put it, the modern European state was the first in which "all are free."

Later writers focused upon specific features of civil society, and often found Anglo-Saxon civil societies to be peculiarly exemplary, especially in the nineteenth century when English civility was widely admired. Alexis de Tocqueville was struck by the social creativity of Americans. And recent work in political science, most notably that by the Harvard scholar Robert Puttnam,[4] has further consolidated the case for believing that civil society is the indispensable soil for the spiritual plants we most admire. Puttnam's work on Italian politics over the last few decades has revealed the way in which central power has been devolved democratically to the regions since 1970. Where you find an abundance of voluntary associations—choral societies, sports clubs and the like—democracy works. Where you find an entrenched, segmentary client society, as in southern Italy, it doesn't. And what is most depressing about his findings is that the line that demarcates these two forms of life corresponds to the thousand-year-old division between the city republics of the north and the Norman kingdoms to the south.

This is depressing because it provides historical evidence for something obvious. We may talk of "creating a civil society" in the old communist world, but civil society is not the sort of thing any single power can create—and certainly not from without. It bubbles up from below, from the vitality, the sense of independence and mutual trust among people themselves, or it does not happen at all. And that is why the dream of the mid-twentieth century, that European standards of democracy and rights could be transplanted to the newly self-governing colonies of the European powers, was merely a dream. (Which is not to say that the dream has died. When it became clear that communism was collapsing, two of the books that greeted its demise were Gregory Fossedel's *The Democratic Imperative: Exporting the American Revolution* (Basic Books, 1989), and Joshua Muravchik's *Exporting Democracy:*

[4]R.D. Putnam, with R. Leonardi and R. Nanetti, *Making Democracy Work: Civic Tradition in Modern Italy* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1993).

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Fulfilling America's Destiny (AEI Press, 1991). Both authors were conservative and both books were taken seriously.)

Gellner is right, then: civil society is an extremely fragile creation. It is a historical creation, and history is a capricious benefactor. What she gives, she can take away. It is obvious that ex-communist states have a massive and perhaps insoluble problem in creating or re-creating civil society. What is perhaps less evident is that we in the West have a problem sustaining it.

What obscures this point is that the collapse of communism may still be seen in Cold War terms, as merely the triumph of our system against theirs: something external to us. Politically speaking, this is what happened. But it is a reading of events which wrongly suggests that communism was quite separate from our own free way of life; it wasn't. Communism arose out of the most powerful impulse in our civilization, which is to unite behind a powerful government, using the entire resources of technology, to make our society perfect.

Perfection and imperfection are thus central underlying categories of our political understanding, and they were exercised conspicuously in the Cold War rhetoric of moral equivalence. Communist societies were, by general agreement, horrible, but we in the West (so many believed) could hardly boast that we had solved the problems of social injustice which had generated communism. It is notorious that many intellectuals in the West were tender and protective of communism even when they recognized its horrors, and the reason was that they recognized in it the same impulse towards social perfectionism to which they themselves responded. They could not wholeheartedly condemn it because it stood for something whose foundation they themselves felt to be valuable. And it is this fact which explains why the newly resurgent ideal of civil society is so profoundly ambiguous.

It is ambiguous because it is both an explanatory ideal which relates social conditions to forms of political expression such as democracy, and also a normative ideal which reflects back upon our own Western societies in order to tell us that we are imperfect. A civil society is one in which a vigorous population exercises its initiative by finding satisfactions in a richness of individual and group activities. But those who are economically poor are also likely to be poor in the scope of their social and cultural involvement. The poor thus become a reproach, revealing our own failures to realize the ideal of a civil society.

This is a drift of ideas which will inevitably be picked up by the dominant technocratic rationalism of our civilization. How are we to remedy our civil defects? What is to solve this problem? Obviously, the only society-wide problem solver we have, namely, the government. The state must become a facilitator drawing the poor into the morally desirable network of civil society. But those who are dependent upon the government for the conditions of their vitality are precisely those who do not belong in a civil society. The concept of civil society as a normative ideal thus leads, in this context, to a contradiction.

The source of the trouble, as I see it, lies in technocratic rationalism which seeks to manage the way we all live. It torments us by a ceaseless preoccupation with the imperfections of our society, and seeks to solve these imperfections by modifying the actual choices we make in conducting our affairs. And at this fundamental level, there is no other way to block this slide towards a benign despotism than to state the most fundamental proposition on which our liberties depend: it is that our social imperfections are *our* perfection.

What this formula means can be explained by a logical fork: If we remain

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responsible creatures making moral choices, many of us will act unwisely and one of the consequences will be the social imperfections that worry us. Such is the real condition of civil society. If, on the other hand, we first take our political bearings from social imperfections, we cannot escape embracing a managerial regime which blocks our imperfect moral choices and replaces them with the wise choices of democratic management. In reality, of course, this is entirely chimerical. We know all too well that governments lack this wisdom. All we need observe here, however, is that there can be no moral life, and hence no civil society without social imperfection.

This brings us back to Gellner's conception of civil society. He recognizes that it rests upon a basic moral fact, which is individualism, and he gives an account of it. This seems to me the weakest part of his argument.

A civil society, he tells us, is composed of modular men who (like modular furniture) can either stand alone, or fit together with other pieces to compose some desired and desirable structure. The remarkable thing, he is clear, is that the constantly changing links between these modular men are strong and stable—by contrast with the unreliability and treachery of the individuals in segmentary pluralist societies. What he is not clear about is *why* these modern individualists are morally reliable. Is it cost-benefit analysis, based on the realization that reliability certainly "pays dividends" in the long run? Is it perhaps the lingering terrors of Calvinist religion, which created and sustains a tradition in which men abide by the rules? Gellner does not know, and says it does not much matter, for the simple fact is that these individualists have "helped bring about civil society."

It does matter, however. The success of Pacific Rim economies has shown that the modularity required for economic success, a modularity quite sufficient for stunning vitality in this respect, does not require individualism and civil society. Japanese industry is nothing if not modular. It serves the firm and does not involve what the West takes to be civil society. It may be, of course, that Asian economic success is not only facilitated but entirely dependent on the fact that it is imitating the established social and technological model of the West; or it may not. We do not know.

What is clear, however, is that the kind of individualism which Gellner treats patronizingly as an offshoot of outmoded religious belief or as a smart, self-interested calculation is under severe attack, and that the attack is based on misconception. The Oxford political theorist John Gray, currently in the throes of an intense passion directed against free market institutions, has criticized Gellner for conflating market institutions with individualist Western civil society. Quite what Gray wants to say is not clear. Although he engages in a good deal of rhetorical frothing at the mouth about market institutions, he also seems to think they are to be encouraged so long as they are "channeled" and "embedded" within a culture, which will certainly mean that they must be closely controlled by governments. He detests something called "neo-liberalism" (it is, he tells us, "hubristic") but seems to approve of "a liberal way of life." What he approves of is threatened by what he calls "the excesses of individualism."

To talk about "excessive" individualism is very much *à la mode*. The Archbishop of Canterbury earlier this year had a conference on this very topic with Anglican bishops from all over the world. What is sinister about the expression is that it identifies the individualism of the West not with honor and moral responsibility for one's actions, but with

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mere indulgence in desires, and individual desires must, of course, be circumscribed. If this false view were the essence of individualism, then criminals would be the most complete individualists, whereas in fact they are usually the people least capable among men of exploring their own individuality. It is this view of individuality which lies behind the question with which Gray challenges Gellner: "How are Western market institutions with their animating individualist culture and liberal civil societies to be politically legitimated in a context of low or zero economic growth?"[5]

This question is the counterpart of Gellner's view that the strains and challenges of modern society can only be borne because the populace can be bribed by rising standards of living—something Gellner elsewhere calls "the Danegeld state."[6] There is, no doubt, a certain realism in this view, and it may perhaps justify the common view (Gray being particularly insistent on it) that economic decline is on the way and we had better tighten our seat belts for a bumpy ride.

But what is concealed by Gray's floating metaphysics about "market forces," and what cannot be defended in terms of Gellner's realism, is the fact that Western individualism is a moral commitment to a free way of life rather than an optional device we have adopted in order to get rich. Hobbes, the great theorist of liberal individualism, saw that a modern society would have a problem in inducing men to abide by their agreements, and thought that "the passion to be reckoned upon is fear;" but he also thought important "a glory, or pride in appearing not to need to break [one's word]." He agreed that it was "a generosity too rarely found to be presumed on, especially in the pursuers of wealth, command or sensual pleasure; which are the greatest part of mankind." Generous or not, this is the moral constitution of our relatively uncorrupt societies, however many may be delinquent. And it results from the central importance we assign to individuality as the vehicle of moral responsibility. But there is no doubt that the basis of Western civil societies is a moral commitment to admiration for the character of individuality. Neither the power of government, nor the bribery of economic growth, could possibly sustain it without this central element.

Conditions of Liberty raises, then, the largest of questions. It develops a view Gellner has long held, that the "really fundamental trait of classical capitalism [a.k.a. civil society] is that it is a very special kind of order in that the economic and the political seem to be separated, to a greater degree than in any other historically known social form." But then he spoils this remark by an aside which reveals the weakness of his exclusive preoccupation with structure and interest: "The individualism of capitalism is a corollary of this, and is less fundamental." On the contrary, it is the morality of our Western societies, our taste for dealing with others as independent beings, which lies at the heart of civil society. Tastes and moralities are precarious things, and we must never forget that what history gives, history can take away. □

[5]John Gray, "Our Way," *London Review of Books*, September 22, 1994, p. 9.

[6]See "The Danegeld State" in *Spectacles and Predicaments* (Cambridge University Press, 1979). This image of modern liberal societies cannot help but recall Kipling's lines: "But though you may pay him the Danegeld you'll never get rid of the Dane."

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The New Cold War Debate

Gideon Rose

Books and essays discussed in this article:

Melvyn P. Leffler, *A Preponderance of Power: National Security, the Truman Administration, and the Cold War* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1992), 689 pp., $19.95.

Bruce Cummings, *The Origins of the Korean War, Vol. I: Liberation and the Emergence of Separate Regimes, 1945-1947*, and *Vol. II: The Roaring of the Cataract, 1947-1950* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1981, 1990), *Vol. I*, 608 pp., $24.95; *Vol. II*, 976 pp., $35.00.

Bruce Cummings, "'Revising Postrevisionism,' or, The Poverty of Theory in Diplomatic History," *Diplomatic History* 17:4 (Fall 1993).

John Lewis Gaddis, "The Tragedy of Cold War History: Reflections on Revisionism," *Foreign Affairs* 73:1 (January/February 1994).

Wilson Miscamble, *George F. Kennan and the Making of American Foreign Policy, 1947-1950* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1992), 419 pp., $17.95.

Sergei N. Goncharov, John W. Lewis, and Xue Litai, *Uncertain Partners: Stalin, Mao, and the Korean War* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1993), 393 pp., $45.00.

David Holloway, *Stalin and the Bomb: The Soviet Union and Atomic Energy, 1939-1956* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1994), 464 pp., $30.00.

Thomas J. McCormick, *America's Half-Century: United States Foreign Policy in the Cold War* (Baltimore, MD: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1989), 273 pp., $12.95.

NATIONS, LIKE PEOPLE, view their past through emotional and psychological prisms. The normal course is for national history to become heroic myth—a saga of obstacles overcome, evil vanquished, national character triumphant. Sometimes the opposite tendency emerges, however, towards reproach and even self-hate.

A current example of such opposing caricatures can be found in the Smithsonian Institution's plans to commemorate the fiftieth anniversary of the end of World War II with a display of the *Enola Gay*. The initial script for the exhibit was sharply critical of U.S. actions, declaring that "For most Americans, this was...a war of vengeance. For most Japanese, it was a war to defend their unique culture against Western imperialism." But when these plans leaked, the general response was a demand that the atomic bombing be celebrated as a central and defining act in the nation's heroic tradition. Neither camp seemed able to confront the fascinating and complex questions about the subject which a bevy of fine historians has raised.

Americans are particularly prone to such self-praise or blame, because both reaffirm the central fact of our national essence, which has always been defined more by institutions and creed than by such mundane factors as language, ethnicity, or religion. In domestic policy the tension between our ideals and our political practice surfaces in recurring battles over political reform, civil rights, and social equality; in foreign policy, the fights cen-

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ter on whether American actions are pure or self-interested.

International conflicts are so contrary to liberal ideals that we seem able to accept them only as glaring exceptions to normal practice, tragedies forced on an innocent America by the blatant ambitions of others. Every twentieth-century American war has first been defended on such grounds; at some point each has been attacked on these grounds as well. One of the longest-running battles has been fought over responsibility for the Cold War, and it has recently flared up again.

The basic structure of the historians' debate on this issue can be expressed in the old dialectic of thesis, antithesis, and synthesis.[1] The standard version of what happened after World War II—put forward by participants, particularly Acheson and Truman, and backed by historians such as Herbert Feis, Robert Ferrell, and Adam Ulam—is that Stalin's Soviet Union seized Eastern and much of Central Europe, set up miniature Stalinist tyrannies, and started grabbing for yet more territory or at least political control in Europe, Asia, and the Near East. U.S. policymakers tried to cooperate in creating a new and better world order, but were rebuffed and hoodwinked simultaneously; in the nick of time the Truman administration organized a new defense line in Western Europe and East Asia. Eventually, through NATO, the Korean War, massive rearmament, and constant vigilance, the Soviet threat was contained and deterred. Vietnam was a noble effort in this tradition, although perhaps impractical and therefore misguided.

In the 1960s many American scholars—including William Appleman Williams, Lloyd Gardner, Gabriel Kolko, Walter LaFeber, and Gar Alperovitz—advanced a "revisionist" perspective which in various permutations essentially reversed the picture: At the end of World War II the Soviet Union was weak, devastated, and cautious. The United States, on the other hand, was powerful, even hegemonic. Driven by zealous anti-communism and/or domestic economic pressures, we crushed revolutionary movements around the globe and hemmed the Soviets in by establishing capitalist beachheads all around them. They and others had little choice but to defend themselves. Vietnam was the classic expression of U.S. imperialism in action.

Through the mid-1970s American historians tore each other apart over these issues; epithets like "communist" and "fascist" lay just beneath the surface of debate. Meanwhile, certain "realist" scholars—George Kennan, Walter Lippmann, Hans Morgenthau and Louis Halle—had presented a third view from early on, one which saw the Cold War as the inevitable clash of two superpowers with conflicting ideologies, suspiciously confronting each other over the power vacuums left by World War II. This interpretation gained broader acceptance after the flames of the orthodox-revisionist battle had burned down a bit, and by the 1980s a somewhat traditional version could be promulgated by John Lewis

[1]For an overview of the debate, see Jerald A. Combs, *American Diplomatic History: Two Centuries of Changing Interpretations* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1983). Some other interesting historiographical essays include Charles S. Maier, "Revisionism and the Interpretation of Cold War Origins," *Perspectives in American History* Vol. 4 (1970); Donald Cameron Watt, "Britain and the Historiography of the Yalta Conference and the Cold War," *Diplomatic History* 13:1 (December 1989); and Geir Lundestad, "Moralism, Presentism, Exceptionalism, Provincialism, and Other Extravagances in American Writings on the Early Cold War Years," *Diplomatic History* 13:4 (September 1990).

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Gaddis as the "post-revisionist synthesis."[2] American policymakers, in this view, had not been evil, nor driven to unload surplus goods or acquire new markets; their European counterparts, moreover, had feared the Soviet threat at least as much. Still, although the Soviets clearly wanted to extend their influence wherever possible, they probably did not have a grand plan for world empire. American officials sometimes exaggerated the coherence of Soviet designs and overreacted to them, moreover, and the conflict was marked by many miscalculations on both sides. The Korean War, in this interpretation, was crucial in globalizing and militarizing the conflict; Vietnam was the rote application of containment under different and inappropriate conditions.

A New Round

FOR MORE THAN a decade, the debate simmered on the profession's back burner, as younger and less contentious scholars produced sober, solid articles and monographs on various sub-topics: U.S. policy towards a particular region, say, or a particular issue-area.[3] Recently, however—and stimulated by the need for explanation created by the sudden end of the Cold War—important works have tried to redraw the outlines of the big picture, and in the process have triggered a new round of controversy and vituperation. Some of the new scholarship is revisionist, some traditional, and some post-revisionist; because the last category crosses several faultlines, it has provoked the most confusion, drawing praise and attack from all sides.

Bruce Cummings of the University of Chicago has tried to resuscitate the revisionist enterprise through a massive, two-volume study of *The Origins of the Korean War*. Beginning with a detailed exposition of Korean politics at the end of World War II, he argues that disastrous superpower intervention precluded a unified settlement on the peninsula and set the stage for the later conflict—which is best understood as a civil war between Koreans with different political visions for their country. The United States, as the world's economic hegemon, was driven by the functional requirements of the global capitalist system; U.S. policymakers carved out an unnatural and un-Korean entity in the South, and then tried to incorporate it as part of an American co-prosperity sphere. Cummings sees Dean Acheson as the evil genius of the period, the one who most clearly understood the rhythms of the international political economy and made sure U.S. policy kept the beat. In this view Acheson did not merely welcome the Korean War, but may well have deliberately provoked it, as a way of maintaining support for containment at home and regenerating the economies of Japan, Western Europe, and the United States. (A similar "world system" perspective is offered by Cummings' soulmate Thomas J. McCormick in *America's*

[2]John Lewis Gaddis, "The Emerging Post Revisionist Thesis on the Origins of the Cold War," *Diplomatic History* 7:3 (June 1983). See also his seminal *The United States and the Origins of the Cold War, 1941-1947* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1972), and *The Long Peace: Inquiries Into the History of the Cold War* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1987).

[3]E.g., works such as Bruce R. Kuniholm, *The Origins of the Cold War in the Near East: Great Power Conflict and Diplomacy in Iran, Turkey, and Greece* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1980); Eduard Mark, "American Policy Toward Eastern Europe and the Origins of the Cold War, 1941-46: An Alternative Interpretation," *Journal of American History* Vol. 68 (September 1981); Robert A. Pollard, *Economic Security and the Origins of the Cold War, 1945-1950* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1985); and Fraser Harbutt, *The Iron Curtain: Churchill, America and the Origins of the Cold War* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1986).

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Half-Century: United States Foreign Policy in the Cold War.)

Cummings is a classic example of a fine mind turned in the wrong direction. He is very smart, has read as much as anybody, and persistently comes up with intriguing interpretations which are utterly wrong-headed. His bizarre conspiracy theories update I.F. Stone's *Hidden History of the Korean War* (Monthly Review Press, 1952), lingering over marginal shady characters, suspiciously "coincidental" events and "missing" documents. This is Cold War history in the paranoid style, *à la* Oliver Stone, and one is hardly surprised to find Cummings use Fletcher Prouty—the role model for the mysterious "Mr. X" in Stone's *JFK*—to explain how the U.S. might have duped the North Koreans into crossing the 38th parallel in June 1950.[4]

If Cummings provides the most sophisticated and detailed revisionist scenario yet seen, other scholars have recently brought new life to the orthodox interpretation. In his excellent study of George Kennan, for example, Wilson Miscamble documents how political rather than economic factors headed policymakers' concerns. He also downplays the coherence and control which allegedly marked U.S. actions, concluding that

> American policymakers simply struggled to respond to a succession of international crises—Western Europe's political weakness, economic dislocation, and military insecurity; the diverse Communist challenges in China, Italy, and Greece; the conundrum of Palestine; the power vacuums in Germany and Japan; the opportunity presented by Titoism; and the perceived threat posed by Soviet military power and atomic capability. Through addressing these situations a foreign policy emerged...being called forth by circumstances more so than by being imposed on them.[5]

In their recent book *Uncertain Partners: Stalin, Mao, and the Korean War* (Stanford University Press, 1993), the international team of Sergei N. Goncharov, John W. Lewis, and Xue Litai may not detail a monolithic communist plot to take over the world, but they leave no doubt as to what happened: The war was Kim Il Sung's idea, launched after he persuaded Stalin and Mao to come on board, with the three tyrants' decision-making marked in equal parts by realpolitik, adventurism, and miscalculation.

The most prominent of the neo-traditionalists, ironically, is John Lewis Gaddis, who burst onto the scene two decades ago as the dominant figure of a quite different group, the post-revisionists. Critics on the left had always charged that his ostensibly "new" work was really only "orthodoxy plus archives." Whatever the truth of those changes, by the 1990s, Gaddis had moved openly toward the most orthodox of positions, blaming the Cold War on Stalin's character and accusing revisionists of being soft on communism. American historians have to stop being "shallow, short-sighted and antiseptic," he now writes, and start being "honest"; they have to recognize that since the Soviet leader was another Hitler, compromise was impossible. "It is really quite difficult...to see how there could have been any long-term basis for coexistence—for getting along—with either of these fundamentally evil dictators."[6] (Picking up on the impossibility-of-compromise-with-Stalin theme is David Holloway's thorough study *Stalin and the Bomb: The Soviet Union and Atomic Energy, 1939-1956*; it rebuts the soft revisionist school which held U.S.

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[4] *Volume II*, pp. 601-2. My favorite section is the one in which Cummings magically transforms Acheson's misguided January 1950 Press Club speech (the one which left South Korea outside the American "defensive perimeter") into an ingenious trap for the hot-headed North Koreans (*Volume II*, pp. 408-438).

[5] *George F. Kennan and the Making of American Foreign Policy, 1947-1950*, p. 348.

[6] "The Tragedy of Cold War History: Reflections on Revisionism," *Foreign Affairs* (January/February 1994), pp. 149-50.

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nuclear policies responsible for the arms race.) For his part, Cummings has responded to Gaddis' latest salvo by calling it "an exercise in fiction," arguing that Gaddis' entire oeuvre represents "not a synthesis, but a vain attempt at post-Indochina War consensus, marred continuously by the habits of stigma and exclusion. Fortunately, it has not worked..."

Fear and Power

AMID ALL THE controversy and name-calling, one new book—Melvyn Leffler's *A Preponderance of Power: National Security, the Truman Administration, and the Cold War*—stands out, both because of its intellectual stature and because no one seems quite sure which epithets to throw at it. Leffler's Bancroft Prize-winning work brings together different strands of the debate in new and interesting ways. Thus he argues that the driving force behind the Truman administration's policies was not a search for markets, or anti-communist ideology, or domestic politics, or humanitarian concerns, but rather simply fear of the Soviet threat. And yet the threat policymakers reacted to, he explains, was not immediate or primarily military; it was a potential future challenge to America's broader environment: "Soviet/Communist domination of the preponderant resources of Eurasia would force the United States to alter its political and economic system. The U.S. government would have to restructure the nation's domestic economy, regiment its foreign trade, and monitor its domestic foes" (p.13). Such a future was not inevitable, however, if the United States could develop and maintain a "preponderance of power," beating the Soviets to the punch by promoting and consolidating a vastly expanded American sphere of influence abroad. In sum, American policy during the early Cold War:

> was motivated by fear and power: fear that worldwide conditions might circumscribe U.S. influence and tempt another totalitarian state to coopt resources and labor that could eventually threaten the strategic and economic interests of the United States; power in the knowledge that in the short run the United States had the capabilities, if it could generate the will, to thwart those very long-term developments it feared. (p. 51)

Leffler's stress on the Soviet threat (and his denigration of mundane economic concerns) upsets revisionists, while his emphasis on U.S. power, initiative, and material interests makes traditionalists uneasy. This leads to such odd juxtapositions as Cummings lamenting that "the word capitalism barely intrudes Leffler's text," at the same time that the *The New Republic* castigates the book as "the sacred text of neo-revisionism," furious that it downplays the role of communist ideology and the "moral or humanitarian concerns" of Truman and his advisers. John Lewis Gaddis, on the other hand, has declared it "the best book anyone has yet written on the United States and the origins of the Cold War."

Leffler's book does have flaws: it ignores the domestic political context entirely, the style is somewhat bloodless, and the concluding assessments, while judicious, are obviously subjective. (He finds the Truman team wise in grasping the nature of the Soviet threat; prudent in taking initial steps to counter it; and foolish in overestimating the importance of the Third World.) Its lasting importance, however, should lie in the way it brings a concern with America's changing relative power to the forefront of the Cold War debate. Leffler demonstrates how policymakers' perception of external threats, interests, and opportunities are related to their state's capabilities, thus incorporating in his work some of the best insights of international relations theory. Rather than trying to judge in isolation the "objective" nature of either the Soviet threat or the American response, he correctly focuses

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attention on the dynamic interaction between the various countries, their goals, and their relative strength.

A Faustian Bargain

HOW THEN *should* we understand the American role in the early Cold War? The answer begins with World War II—specifically, with the disjunction between America's positive and negative goals during that conflict. Viewed from one angle, the American effort in World War II was a fight *against* the Axis. The Roosevelt administration decided from the beginning to press for total victory over Germany and Japan, and was able to carry the decision out. Viewed from another angle, however, the American effort was a fight *for* a certain vision of international order: a postwar settlement that would provide the United States and the world with lasting peace and prosperity.

American plans for the postwar era represented what might be called a Wilsonianism of the strong, but one tempered by lessons drawn from the perceived failures of American diplomacy at the end of World War I. At heart was the conviction that making the world over in America's image—liberal, democratic, capitalist—would serve everyone alike. The new order was to have two dimensions: a free trade system working through the IMF, the World Bank, and the International Trade Organization; and a collective-security-system-cum-great-power concert, based on a continuation of the Grand Alliance and working through the United Nations. Economically, the United States would lead, in conjunction and competition with Britain and other Western European countries. Politically, the United States would continue to exercise a benign hegemony in the Western hemisphere, while Western Europe would be a British sphere of influence and Eastern Europe a Soviet one; in the Pacific, the United States would share responsibilities with China as European colonialism was phased out. Germany and Japan were to be purged and demilitarized; beyond that their fates were left undecided.

The short- and mid-term planning was left somewhat fuzzy, but American policymakers in 1945 did not foresee much trouble ahead. Other nations, surely, would accept the obvious benefits of a new and improved Wilsonian order, and in any case the U.S. had the power and ability to do the job properly the second time around.

Such wartime diplomacy, however, had a crucial flaw: American policymakers failed to link the "negative" and "positive" sides of the struggles together. They did not appreciate that the defeat of the Axis powers, however complete, could be only a necessary, not a sufficient, condition for the emergence of their desired settlement. By contracting out the bulk of the fight against Nazi Germany to the Soviet Union, the Western Allies made a Faustian bargain which resulted in the occupation of Central and Eastern Europe by an undemocratic, anti-capitalist tyranny. The sheer magnitude of devastation stemming from Nazi domination and total war, moreover, led to political and economic chaos across the continent, at the same time that the costs of fighting drained the strength of America's true allies. This situation was hardly conducive to the creation of America's postwar vision; it provided, rather, fertile ground for its opposite—the emergence of radical, Soviet-influenced regimes in the industrial heart of Europe.

If the negative struggle ended in mid-1945, therefore, America's second, positive struggle continued long after V-E and V-J Day. U.S. policymakers after the war faced not harmony, but a new and daunting set of challenges. Leffler puts it well:

> Britain was weaker than they thought; European financial problems more intractable; German and Japanese economic woes more deep-seated; revolutionary nationalism more virulent; Soviet actions more ominous; and American demobilization more rapid. (p. 16)

During the period 1945 to 1947, the Truman administration progressively real-

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ized just how mistaken previous American assumptions about the postwar world had been, and just how inadequate were the international institutions which had been created. During the same period they grew skeptical about Soviet willingness to help create a stable new order. Leffler gets it right again:

> At the end of the war, U.S. officials did not think that they were engaged in a zero-sum game of power politics with the Soviet Union. They wanted to cooperate with the Kremlin. But they harbored a distrust sufficiently profound to require terms of cooperation compatible with vital American interests. (p. 15)

By 1947, they decided that in order to salvage as much as possible of the American postwar vision, the institutional framework so recently and laboriously constructed would have to be set aside, and a new one created based on more realistic, less universal assumptions.

The Cold War, therefore, is best understood as a consequence of the Truman administration's decisions to pursue what remained of the positive goals America fought for in Europe during World War II, in the face of Soviet decisions to follow a comparable course. Given the conflicting visions of order held by these two great powers, and the conditions existing in Europe at the end of the war, such a clash seems inevitable; only one side's abdication of the field could have prevented it.[7] American officials, to be sure, did not plan to embark on a course of permanent, massive intervention abroad; they wanted and expected their new order to emerge without much effort. In the event, however, the combination of America's burgeoning domestic strength and other nations' temporary weakness inexorably pulled America's interests and commitments outward.

The first set of postwar challenges arose from Eastern Europe. Roosevelt had played a double game during the war with regard to the territories occupied by the Red Army, tacitly conceding these areas to a Soviet sphere while denying that he was doing so to the American public (and perhaps to himself). The Truman administration faced the inevitable returns on such a dual policy. In the latter half of 1945, U.S. officials settled on a middle position: the U.S. would accept a sphere of influence, but only an "open" one; the Soviets would be permitted to control their satellites' foreign and security policies, but not dominate their domestic or economic realms. By the end of 1945, therefore, the tensions between the superpowers' conflicting visions of the postwar order had risen fully to the surface, and U.S. officials were made to realize that possession of the bomb would not guarantee that America's will would prevail across the board.

At this point, events in the Near East helped crystallize views regarding Soviet expansion, its sources, and the proper response. In early 1946, the Iranian crisis and George Kennan's "Long Telegram" from Moscow converted many to a new paradigm for U.S.-Soviet relations. Soviet behavior in the Near East seemed to show Moscow's aggressive, destabilizing intentions; Kennan's analysis argued that since those intentions were driven by internal causes, American appeasement would not work; and the eventual Soviet retreat in Iran seemed to show that a confrontational policy *was* effective.

Late in 1946, the true dimensions of the postwar economic and political crisis in Western Europe became clear.

[7]The disillusionment and hysteria accompanying the "long twilight struggle," on the other hand, was a result of the wartime failure by the Western allies to acknowledge the gap between their political and military policies. For this, as well as for the initial postwar fumbling and confusion, the leaders of the early 1940s were directly responsible.

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Reinterpreted in light of the new view of the Soviet Union, anarchy in the continent's industrial heartland now appeared as a magnet attracting an opportunistic enemy. The harsh winter of 1946-47 pushed Europe even closer to chaos, galvanizing American officials (after prodding from their allies) into a dynamic response. In addition to dispatching a quick infusion of cash late in 1947, Truman administration officials launched the Marshall Plan, an unprecedented program of massive proportions, to fuel the reconstruction of Western European economies. When Britain sent word early in 1947 that it could no longer afford its commitments in Greece and Turkey, the administration responded with the Truman Doctrine, taking over the commitments as its own and making plain its intention of blocking further advances of Soviet influence, whether direct or indirect. Finally, the Truman administration helped found the North Atlantic Treaty Organization, formally committing the United States to the defense of Europe from a Soviet attack.

With these bold and unprecedented steps American officials thus salvaged a portion of their wartime vision, establishing a new set of commitments and institutions to supplement, and in certain important respects supplant, those they had embraced only a few years before. The outbreak of the Korean War, finally, confirmed and intensified the Cold War paradigm.The new order would eventually be maintained with the help of some of the institutions of the "first wave" of postwar planning—the IMF, the World Bank, and GATT.

Where does this leave us in the quest for a unified national myth? Traditionalists have trouble accepting an American colossus, even one which restored and protected the rest of the free world. Revisionists have trouble accepting that American power was generally a force for good. Post-revisionists bear the mixed news that American behavior was the product of a unique set of circumstances, in which overwhelming relative strength enabled the United States to act with a freedom it may never achieve again.

It should not surprise us that these topics provoke passionate debates. Yet if there is any period for which the United States need not shy away from a forthright presentation of its national record, it is the 1940s. In Germany we sponsored a new democracy rising from the ashes of Nazi tyranny. America may indeed have been an economic "hegemon," but capitalism is not a zero-sum game: Forty years after being revived with Marshall Plan aid, West Germany was able to spend *fifteen times* that aid per capita in reviving its own ravaged eastern half.

While American policymakers may not always have been the innocent heroes of the traditional account, they were still less the villains of revisionist demonology. Acting under enormous pressure in extraordinary and unprecedented circumstances, they helped create a political and economic order across much of the globe in which more people could taste freedom and prosperity than ever before. They also made mistakes, attended to their own interests, sometimes lied, and casually ignored the darker sides of anti-communists in many places. On balance, however, it is doubtful if any nation with so much power has used it so wisely and so well. The appropriate way to present such a record is simple: let the full and complex truth be known, and let it speak for itself. □

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The Future of Equality

Francis Fukuyama

Thomas Sowell, *Race and Culture: A World View* (New York: Basic Books, 1994), 331pp., $25.00.

LIKE TECTONIC plates slowly grinding against one another prior to causing an earthquake, there are two slowly developing tendencies in the world that will lead to major disruptions in the future, both within societies and among them.

The first of these developments is the "end of history." By this I mean the steady convergence of political and economic institutions around the models of liberal democracy and capitalism, and the continued implementation of liberal principles, particularly the principle of equality of opportunity, within liberal democracies. There has rarely been as much homogeneity in the basic structure of the institutions of advanced countries than there is today. Despite a series of peripheral conflicts around the world, nothing that has happened in the five years since I wrote the original "End of History?" article in this journal has fundamentally contradicted this view, and much has occurred to confirm it.

The consequence for international politics is not that nations are converging in all respects. On the contrary, the fact that their basic institutions have become so similar means that they are differentiated from one another increasingly by other factors, the most obvious and important of which is culture. Americans and Japanese thought they were all part of the "free world" during the Cold War; today, they see much more clearly that they have very distinctive forms of both democracy and capitalism.

The second development is the steadily increasing technological sophistication of modern economies and the societies they spawn. In the 1940s and 1950s, studies by economists showed that in narrow economic terms, it did not pay Americans to go to college: not only would the average college graduate not be remunerated significantly better than his high school-educated peer, but he would lose four years of working life that could otherwise be spent in a relatively high-wage steel or auto plant. Today, just the opposite situation prevails: the wage differential between college and high school graduates has been widening steadily, and the gap increases with even higher levels of education.

The question of stagnating wages for low-skill workers in the United States has been under intense debate in recent years, particularly since the 1992 presidential election when Bill Clinton laid the blame for it on the Reagan tax and spending policies of the early 1980s. This charge was silly, not least because the stagnation in low-skill wages had begun prior to Reagan's election; and, indeed, it continued after Bush's defeat. Many less politically motivated observers blamed the phenomenon on globalization, which means that low-skill workers in the United States increasingly have to compete against labor of similar skills but lower living standards in (mostly) Third World countries. The view that low working-class wages were due to foreign imports of goods and American exports of capital gave the debate on the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) in the fall of 1993 a particularly nasty tone, and later threatened passage of the treaty coming out of the Uruguay Round of the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT). The NAFTA debate revealed in a vivid way a genuinely new degree of class polarization in the United States, between well-educated elites (whether traditionally Democrat or Republican), who stood to benefit from increased trade liberal-

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tion, and less-educated working people, who feared its consequences.

The view that the stagnation in low-skill wages is due to globalization has been vigorously contested by economists like Paul Krugman of Stanford, who have sought to demonstrate statistically that because of the relatively small exposure of the U.S. economy to world trade, the latter could not produce the large income differential attributed to it. The culprit, according to Krugman, is technological change itself, which has dramatically boosted the rewards to those able to live and work with it.[1] This view is consistent with theories of "human capital" laid out by Gary Becker and others: as the technological sophistication and information intensity of the economy grow, the returns on investments in human capital—i.e., education and training—also increase. In this respect, the vaunted "information superhighway" can only increase income stratification in the United States, since it will greatly reward those with the knowledge and skills needed to use it.

What do growing inequalities in income distribution have to do with the end of history? Namely this: in the past, people were differentiated from each other within a society, and nations were differentiated from one another in the international system, by a host of artificial barriers. People were segregated into castes and classes by race, parentage, gender, religion and other factors, while nations differed greatly depending on whether they were traditional monarchies, republics, communist or fascist dictatorships, and so on. The end of history—that is, the victory of liberal principles—has wiped away many of those man-made barriers. This has not ended stratification, however, but rather put it on a different basis. Enhanced equality of opportunity in liberal states has leveled the playing field in critical respects, but sharpened social inequality in others by allowing educated and skilled people to rise to the top in a technologically-stratified meritocracy. Similarly, the end of ideologically-imposed distinctions between states will allow nations to sort themselves out on a different basis—not in terms of liberal, communist, fascist, or Islamic faiths; nor in terms of traditional goods of international life like territory, population, resources, or geopolitical position; but on the basis of which states have the best endowments of human capital.

Human capital, in turn, has three sources or components. The first is what is conventionally understood by economists as human capital, that is, knowledge and skills that can be acquired through education and training. The second is culture, for certain cultures favor education as an end in itself or promote social cohesion and complex self-organization, while others are hostile to innovation, prize leisure over work, or promote individualism. Third, there may in addition be differences in the way that the raw genetic material of cognitive ability is distributed across populations. Conventional human capital is the result of deliberate human agency (often on the part of the state), while cognitive ability is hard-wired into the biological system and beyond our control. Culture falls somewhere in between: it is a human artifact and therefore changeable, but one that strongly resists manipulation through government policy.

Thomas Sowell's *Race and Culture* provides ample documentation as to the importance of culture as a component of human capital, one that is critical in determining individual and national performance. Much of the discussion will be familiar to readers of Sowell's earlier work on the subject, such as *Ethnic America*, *Essays and Data on American Ethnic Groups*, *The Economics and Politics of Race*, and *Markets and Minorities*. In his usual feisty way, Sowell is eager to debunk liberal assumptions that differences in the performance of ethnic and racial groups are due entirely to surrounding social structures. These groups, on the contrary, have their own innate cultural characteristics that shape those environments. Moreover, cultures are not, as contemporary multicultural ideology would have it, equal in their effects: some promote entrepreneurship and political participation, while others act as obstacles to them.

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[1] See, for example, Paul Krugman, "Competitiveness: A Dangerous Obsession," *Foreign Affairs* (March/April 1994), pp. 28-44.

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Previously, Sowell had limited his cultural comparisons to different ethnic groups within the United States; in *Race and Culture*, he looks more widely at the performance of a variety of ethnic groups in different environmental settings. While the performance of a given group in one society can be explained by circumstantial factors, Sowell argues that similar performance by members of the same group in widely differing locales indicates something about the group's own culture. Thus he argues that while the theory propounded by the sociologist Edna Bonacich's theory of "middleman minorities" maintains that the Jews and overseas Chinese were forced to be intermediaries by hostile host societies that would not permit them advancement in other areas, the consistency with which they pursued such careers even in the presence of alternative opportunities suggests that these were choices favored by their own cultures.

The most interesting and provocative chapter in Sowell's book is that on "Race and Intelligence," which might have seemed even more controversial had it not been trumped by the subsequent publication of the Charles Murray-Richard Herrnstein volume *The Bell Curve* on intelligence and social stratification in America.[2] Sowell begins by noting that there are very large differences in mental performance as measured by standardized I.Q. tests, not only between ethnic and racial groups in the United States, but between the populations of different countries as well. These differences correspond, unsurprisingly, to differences in overall economic performance, with Asians scoring particularly high on mathematical or other non-verbal tests.

Sowell notes that there are substantial methodological problems with these international comparisons, such as the fact that they seldom control adequately for selectivity in the backgrounds of the test-takers. Nonetheless, he argues strongly that the difference in results cannot be attributed to those kinds of simple environmental factors, like socio-economic status, that are usually adduced to explain away the poor performance of American minorities. Sowell points to a large number of studies that show significant variations among environmentally similar groups (such as the Proteus Maze test administered to illiterate adults in different countries), or studies that show similar results for the same group brought up under very different environmental conditions (such as children of black fathers who were raised by German versus American mothers). To demonstrate the limits of socio-economic status in determining performance results, Sowell notes that Asian-Americans taking the Scholastic Aptitude Test (SAT) from families with less than $6,000 in annual income do better on average than black, Mexican-, or native-American SAT-takers from families with incomes of $50,000 and above.

Sowell presents evidence from a number of countries, moreover, that test scores are usually good predictors of subsequent performance. This is not because the preparers of standardized tests have learned how to write "culturally unbiased" exams. Indeed, an exam testing abstract reasoning (at which blacks and other minorities tend to do less well than whites) itself presupposes a cultural familiarity with abstraction. Rather, tests are good predictors of future performance precisely because we live within cultural contexts, in which, for example, the ability to use "white" or "middle-class" words will be much more important to economic success than proficiency in "ghetto English."

This latter point indicates that Sowell takes a very different position from that of Murray and Herrnstein in *The Bell Curve*. While Sowell does not rule out the possibility that the genetic basis for intelligence is distributed differently among biological groups, he notes that culture plays an extremely important part both in what constitutes intelligence itself, and in what one makes of the intelligence with which one is biologically endowed. In support of the first point, he provides data (contested by Murray and Herrnstein) that I.Q. scores for a number of American ethnic groups (including Jews, Italians, and Poles) have risen quite dramatically over time. Other studies

[2]Charles Murray and Richard J. Herrnstein, *The Bell Curve: Intelligence and Class Structure in American Society* (New York: Free Press, 1994).

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have shown that the regional differences among American blacks are often greater than black-white differences. In support of the second point, he notes that the data show that Asian-Americans do not score substantially higher than whites on standardized tests (taking into account both quantitative and verbal), but that they do much better subsequently in terms of income and upward mobility. Evidently, there is something in Asian culture that allows them to make better use of their talents, whether a superior work ethic, stronger family values, or some other factor(s).

Sowell, in other words, attributes to culture most of the effects that Murray and Herrnstein attribute to heredity. I am not in a position to evaluate the merits of the data supporting Sowell's position on the cultural determinacy of I.Q. results, versus those in *The Bell Curve*, but I would be rather inclined to believe Sowell's version. It would certainly be better for people to *believe* that ability is something that can be developed by individual effort, rather than thinking their life chances are purely a matter of genetic accident. Perhaps character will be somewhat less important to success than education and intelligence in tomorrow's technological world, but I doubt it.

Sowell in this book is still very much preoccupied with domestic problems, and pays attention to American controversies that have counterparts abroad, like affirmative action or multiculturalism. While *Race and Culture* draws on a wealth of international data, it unfortunately does not draw out systematic conclusions for international relations *per se*, or for America's position in the world. It is not hard, however, to think through what some of those consequences might be. First, there will be growing stratification within societies that will lead to new sorts of social tensions, and therefore potentially to international tensions. This may not lead to a new age of revolution, but it will put societies under great stress. Internationally, there will be a growing redistribution of power around the world, not based on policies (since these will be similar) but on culture. There will also be a heightened stratification between societies that have the cultural resources to maintain and expand their stock of human capital, and those for whom advancing technology constitutes an ever-larger barrier to entry into the modern world.

The impact of this stratification will be most direct on the global division of labor. As more Third World countries enter the world economy at the bottom, there will be a scramble among the advanced nations to claim high-value-added niches. Their ability to do that, however, will depend not just on their education and training policies, but also on the social and cultural contexts within which those policies are shaped. The United States in particular has not done a good job in educating the bottom third of its population. The reasons for this go well beyond what is generally considered "education policy," and have to do with a variety of cultural constraints on the part of both those being educated, and those seeking to do the educating.

Samuel Huntington is right, in other words, that culture will become a far more salient factor in international politics than during the Cold War. But it is not clear that cultural differences will necessarily lead to "clashes," with civilizations replacing nation-states in a resurrected nineteenth-century balance-of-power world. Cultural competition may well play itself out in the economic rather than the political realm, and may well lead to cultural innovation and adaptation rather than war. The early chapters of Sowell's book contain many examples of cultural collision, for example via migration, which was ultimately enriching for one or both of the parties involved.

Race and Culture leaves something to be desired in the development of its central themes; it is poorly edited and often meanders into issues whose significance is not clear. But Thomas Sowell has nonetheless played a valuable role over the years helping us understand the importance and role of culture, an issue whose importance will only grow in the future. □

Francis Fukuyama is a resident consultant at the RAND Corporation in Washington, D.C., and director of the Johns Hopkins School of Advanced International Studies' Telecommunications Project.

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The *Real* Clash:

DIRE PROPHECIES ABOUT the imminent collapse of Western civilization are nothing new, but James Kurth adds a new twist, arguing the declension from "Christendom" to "Western civilization" contained within itself the seeds of an ultimate demise and that the acceleration of that demise is, in our own time, being propelled by attacks not from without but from within.* From the start, Western civilization has conflated its identity or soul with material prosperity and the military dominance it affords, and, in this, it has decisively differed from the other great civilizations like Islam, which ground their identity and cohesion in religion. Confusion arises because, throughout the rise and triumph of modernism, Western civilization garbed its own inherent secularism with a pious liberalism that has proclaimed individual rights and democratic political processes as transcendent values. And that initial confusion has been compounded because, notwithstanding the inherent secularism, the Western creed long remained firmly grounded in the Judeo-Christian tradition. But as the chickens of Western liberalism finally come home to roost, we face the prospect that, during the first half of the twenty-first century, the final relics of the uneasy compromise between secular materialism and the purportedly transcendent values that justified it will implode.

The forces that are attacking Western civilization, notably the United States, from within are massing under the banner of multiculturalism, justified in the name of our emerging global economy. But multiculturalism, according to Kurth, would never have attained its current prominence had it not been buttressed by feminism, which provides both the politburo and mobilizes the mass movement that is "marginalizing Western civilization in its very intellectual core, the universities and the media of America." Feminism has spearheaded the war on Western civilization, attacking not only the "dead white European males" who formulated and presided over it, but the liberalism, constitutionalism, rule of law, and free markets on which it prided itself. And its post-modern crusade is being carried on the rising tide of deindustrialization, which, among other things, is "splitting" the nuclear family and releasing everyone to the tender mercies of individualism run amok.

We may anticipate the outrage. Feminism responsible for the disintegration of our society and culture! Not likely. Why, feminism is defending the rights of victims against their oppressors and redressing the wrongs of centuries. But no amount of outrage can fully mask the irreducible core of truth in Kurth's argument. From the defense of unrestricted abortion as an individual right to the attack on logic and rationality as the denial of personal experience, feminism has mounted a massive—and astoundingly successful—attack on Western civilization and American society. What Kurth misses is that the success of the attack primarily derives from its convincing appeal to liberal values, notably equality (purported fairness) and individual rights. In a world that has cut women adrift, why should they not look out for themselves? And he would be foolish indeed who rested easy in the comfortable prejudice that women are not as smart and capable as men. Consider the evidence: post-modern feminists may be nihilists, but stupid and incompetent they are not. Nor are they the revolutionaries that both their supporters and opponents claim.

More symptom than cause, feminism

*Elements of Kurth's analysis have precedents, notably in the work of Richard Weaver, who forthrightly charged modern man with having become a moral idiot.

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embodies the collapse of Western civilization under the weight of its own contradictions and capitalism's astounding economic success. Today, feminism is reaping the seeds of the individualism that the Enlightenment sowed, plausibly asking why the benefits afforded the brothers should be denied the sisters. Whatever justifications for that inequality may once have prevailed, they weakened with the marginalization of religion as the principle purpose of and justification for social life and vanished with the emergence of the technology that has ushered in our post-industrial world. Mr. Kurth calls attention to both the marginalization of religion and the emergence of post-industrialism, but he seems uneasy with their combined significance. The most interesting feature of his argument lies in the recognition that Western civilization always did embody a fragile compromise—one (although these are not his words) that depended upon its ability to persuade successive generations to internalize its ideals and its practices. Buried in this argument lies the complimentary, if unarticulated, insight that the capitalism upon which Western civilization rested was inherently self-revolutionizing. In our time, the internalization—what some would call conscience—has demonstrably failed, accelerating the rate and scope of that revolutionary process. And if you take account of the "splitting"—or, more accurately, the destruction—of the nuclear family, which amounts to the divorce of reproduction from morality, it is hard to wonder that our society is eating its children, who may yet eat us.

Mr. Kurth's prose is intellectual and restrained, but the picture it evokes is grim, perhaps even beyond his intent. And here his discussion of feminism is instructive. No doubt, feminism has much to answer for. But a secularized Western civilization, not feminism, created the world that feminism is doing best to inherit.

Elizabeth Fox-Genovese
Emory University

HOW DO YOU refute an article of faith? James Kurth's thumbnail "analysis" of feminism's corrosive effect on Western civilization relies not on argument (and evidence) but declaration. Feminists are largely responsible for the "barbarities" of multiculturalism, he charges, without bothering to describe either the barbarities or the feminists. This is writing in code. Readers who share Kurth's biases are expected to know what he means and to assume he has some knowledge of his subject. I wonder.

Put aside Kurth's facile representation of feminism's history: Feminism was not born in the latter half of the twentieth century, conceived by the movement of women from home to office, as he suggests. It was born in the first half of the nineteenth century. Put aside his limited knowledge of labor history: Women, as well as men, moved into manufacturing jobs during the nineteenth century; by 1850, women constituted one-quarter of the nation's manufacturing force. And the entry of women into office work was not simply a late twentieth-century phenomenon, as Kurth claims: It began in the 1880s; by 1920, half of all clerical workers were women. Put aside, as well, Kurth's suggestion that feminism is to blame for splitting the nuclear family, because office work enabled women to "separate" from their husbands: Office workers don't make that much money, and feminism is hardly to blame for the tendency of men to separate from their children, leaving women to raise families alone. Put aside all of these inaccuracies, and consider this remarkable assertion:

Feminists "despise" constitutionalism, liberalism, and the rule of law, Kurth proclaims, and all you can say is "which feminists?" Not those feminists, like Supreme Court Justice Ruth Bader Ginsberg, who fought to extend constitutional guarantees of equal protection to women. Not the feminists who put their faith in individual rights and gender-neutral laws that would treat women as individuals, instead of feminine prototypes. Not the feminists who lobbied

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hard for legislation prohibiting sex discrimination in employment, education, insurance practices, and government benefit programs. Not the feminists who demand that the federal government apply the rule of law to protestors who block access to abortion clinics, just as civil rights leaders once demanded that the rule of law be applied to segregationists who blocked the access of black children to public schools.

Of course, not all of Kurth's assertions about feminism are equally ridiculous. It's true that many, maybe most feminists oppose free markets, which is hardly surprising, given the crucial role government regulation has played in dismantling over a century of sex discrimination. And, their belief in a regulated marketplace hardly distinguishes feminists from millions of other Americans who support minimum wage, maximum hour and occupation health and safety laws.

It's also true that many academic feminists are deconstructionists, as Kurth says, but some are not; and while Professor Kurth may feel besieged by leftist deconstructionist feminists in academe, they don't exactly dominate the popular culture, which they tend to follow more than lead. (Try to imagine an academic feminist writing a bestselling, mass market book or winning an election.) Perhaps the most famous and influential academic feminist, Catherine MacKinnon, owes her success not to the appeal of radical feminism but to the conservative impulse to censor pornography. It's worth noting that MacKinnon's most ardent opponents are liberal feminists, whose existence Kurth effectively denies. He may think that he's writing about feminism in general, but he seems to be reacting to a particular strain of feminism that's been dominant in academia, which is not the whole world, after all.

If Kurth wants to theorize grandly about feminism's effect on the culture, he ought to get out more, and learn about feminism. It is a much more diverse and complex movement than he imagines, although like every social movement it does have its share of fools and shallow scholars, who traffic more in attitudes than research and ideas.

Wendy Kaminer
Radcliffe Public Policy Institute

IN HIS ARTICLE, "The Real Clash," James Kurth notes, astutely, that Western civilization was declared dead almost from the moment of its intellectual arrival. Then, trenchant point made, he proceeds to read his own funeral rite for the West. Dr. Kurth is just the latest of Spengler's dour successors: over the decades, any number of intellectuals, usually of a rightist stripe, have declared liberalism too self-indulgent, too self-involved and altogether too sissified to survive. It was not that long ago, after all, that Jean-François Revel and his coterie of American fans were explaining to us how democracies were doomed to perish; some of these neo-con Cassandras continued spinning their dismal oracles right up to the fall of the Berlin Wall. Spengler was wrong, of course. So was Revel. And so is Kurth.

Professor Kurth's essay reflects an interesting if not particularly edifying tendency in American post-Cold War thought. His piece has less to do with identifying a useful paradigm than finding a satisfactory enemy. The fifty-year struggle against the evil empire has left us, it seems, with an insatiable appetite for an adversary powerful and pernicious enough to fear and to fight.

Unreconstructed Cold Warriors are still sniffing for the slightest trace of Russian behavior suggesting that Moscow might treat its smaller neighbors with the proprietary interest that, say, the United States shows towards our own. Japan remains a popular demon on the Perotista fringes of American opinion. Huntington's Confucian-Islamic axis has more intellectual

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cachet but also a potentially populist appeal; is there anything more deliciously sinister than the idea of inscrutable mandarins and bloodthirsty mullahs conspiring against the land of the brave and the home of the free? Still, Professor Kurth has gone one step better, for he has found that most comforting of adversaries, sanctified by custom and conveniently close at hand: the enemy within.

Feminists and multiculturalists, it seems, are, (upper case, please; neon, if you have it) DESTROYING WESTERN CIVILIZATION AS WE KNOW IT. They have joined the elect of American history—the Illuminati, the Masons, the Roman Catholics, the Mormons and those all time favorites, the rootless cosmopolitan Jews—who, depending upon the ebb and flow of our national insecurity and the political advantages to be gained, have achieved the dubious honor of serving as our Cultural Enemy Number One.

Professor Kurth is not the first to finger these particular miscreants. Patrick Buchanan and Rush Limbaugh have been denouncing them for years.

But, unlike Buchanan or Limbaugh, Dr. Kurth *does* have an excuse of sorts. He works at a liberal arts college and nothing, of course, is likelier to breed intellectual provincialism than the institutionalized exposure to great ideas. The late Allan Bloom, for instance, elevated the student takeover at Cornell to a cultural significance approximate to the sack of Rome. His successors continue to seize upon every speech-code scandal, tenure quabble or curriculum controversy as irrefutable evidence that, if the Dark Ages have not yet arrived, they are only one more MLA convention away.

Western civilization may be a bit more resilient than Bloom believed or than Dr. Kurth suggests. The radical cant of some campus extremists aside, the vast preponderance of women and minority groups today would identify themselves, I suspect, rather firmly with central Western values: equality, freedom, tolerance. They understand, however, that these values continue to have a tenuous and incomplete hold on American life. In many ways, we are hardly a modern, much less a post-modern society. It was only thirty years ago that the United States finally got around to granting its black citizens the effective right to vote. Anti-semitism was an accepted part of the American creed—even among the elites Dr. Kurth so admires—until the end of World War II. A great many Americans continue to believe that Western civilization is synonymous with their own particular collection of predilections (for speaking English, say) and prejudices (against, to chose an example from today's feverish headlines, homosexuals). A great many others have still to attain full economic equality (such as women) or even access to a decent education (the poor).

Ironically, Professor Kurth and his allies share with their radical adversaries a similar view of Western civilization. Both think of it as a historic artifact, to be honored or denigrated, but dead none the less. Both are wrong. Despite the occasional PC outrage perpetrated by the Left or intermittent outburst of paranoid phantasy indulged in by the Right, the Enlightenment Project is alive and well.

In any case, it is not clear what Professor Kurth suggests we do with all those pushy women and pesky minorities. Shall we send all the girls home early from work? Shall we levy punitive taxes on the wearing of dashikis? Shall we reimpose what Dr. Kurth calls, with retrospective relish, the "ruthless" grand project of Americanization of our immigrants?

Nuclear proliferation, ethnic conflict, trade tensions, environmental degradation: these are some of the real issues facing the United States in the international arena. They are matched by domestic challenges equally complex and acute. And all, if our nervous systems are so disposed, are worth staying up at night to worry about.

But deconstructionism?

It is, perhaps, a suitable subject for dispute over brie at a departmental wine and cheese. But it is *not* the stuff of national nightmares.

James Barnes
Carlyle Group

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Kurth replies:

ELIZABETH Fox-Genovese's letter illustrates the acuity and wisdom that can be found in her other publications on individualism, feminism, and modernity. She thoroughly understands my argument, not only concurring with it but carrying it beyond what I said to what I also believe and could have said.

Feminism is a coherent response to a genuine problem, the situation of women in a post-industrial and global economy. In this, it is similar to socialism, which was a coherent response to the situation of workers in an industrial and national economy. Just as socialism was the most articulate answer to the social question of the late nineteenth century, so feminism is the most articulate answer to the gender question of the late twentieth century. In the end, socialism proved to be a false answer, but this was not until the social question was addressed with wiser and better social alternatives (e.g., social policy, social welfare, social democracy, even sociology). Similarly, feminism may prove to be a false answer, but this will not happen unless there are wiser and better answers put forward to the real problems of women.

The liberalism of the late nineteenth century (sometimes called "possessive individualism") could not by itself come up with these wiser and better social alternatives. Rather, they were developed with the aid of non-liberal and often pre-modern or religious groups and ideas (e.g., Catholic Social Teaching and the Protestant Social Gospel).

Similarly, the liberalism of the late twentieth century (sometimes called "expressive individualism") cannot by itself come up with wiser and better alternatives to feminism, and Fox-Genovese explains why. For one thing, feminism is carrying expressive individualism to its logical conclusion. For another, non-liberal, pre-modern, or religious groups in our own society have not yet addressed the problems of women in ways that are truly sufficient for the great needs.

The truth of the matter is that in the last two generations or so, many American males ceased to believe in anything about Western civilization other than their own self-interest or expressive individualism. And Western civilization was taught within the academy by white American males in ways that made it stale and sterile. These males could provide neither good reasons nor significant resistance against the grand coalition of feminism and multiculturalism. They also could not provide any genuine answers to the real problems of women in a post-industrial and global economy.

I can understand why Wendy Kaminer is angry at my article. Had I written a longer piece, I would have included most of the facts about women and feminism in the nineteenth century that she mentions. But I would have still concluded that the situation of women and feminism in our own time, grounded as it is in a post-industrial and global economy, is both quantitatively and qualitatively different from that of the nineteenth century and that it has far deeper consequences than before. I would have also included most of the distinctions within feminism that she mentions. But I would have still concluded that feminism is best characterized and summarized in the way that Elizabeth Fox-Genovese does. Wendy Kaminer's effort to illustrate the varieties of feminism is actually a useful step toward the creation of alternative answers to women's dilemmas, ones that could be wiser and better than those now put forward by the most articulate and publicized feminists, who falsely claim to speak for most women.

I would be delighted if James Barnes were right in believing that the clash within Western civilization is really and merely a clash within academic institutions. Had I believed so, I wouldn't have bothered to write the last half of my article which so annoys him. Perhaps Mr. Barnes and I can agree to simply look at his own Washington, D.C. If he did not notice any cultural clash between liberals and conservatives before the 1994 congressional elections, I invite him to watch the coming

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clash over cultural values between a Democratic administration and a Republican congress. Perhaps Mr. Barnes' agitated reaction to my article can be explained by his repressed anxieties about what is happening in his own home town.

I could go on and answer Wendy Kaminer and James Barnes point-by-point. But I think that they will benefit most by reading the recent writings of Elizabeth Fox-Genovese.

James Kurth
Swarthmore College

The Future of War:

THE ARTICLES BY Andrew Krepinevich and A.J. Bacevich, as well as commentary by Tom Donnelly, get to the central issue facing the U.S. armed services as they prepare to enter the twenty-first century. It seems to me that three observations are in order on the Bacevich argument and Donnelly's commentary.

I regret that one must begin by deploring the tone of my friend Andy Bacevich's essay. To open with an *ad hominem* attack diverts attention from Bacevich's thesis: that the American military has missed the two central military revolutions of the twentieth century and is now falling back on the ever popular (at least with professional soldiers) solution of creating an *armée de métier* as the answer to America's defense problems. Such *a priori* impeachment of the responsible military leadership by a now-civilian defense intellectual is too easily interpreted as self-justification and demeans the substantial argument Bacevich presents.

In fact, one point Bacevich might have labored more heavily is the extent to which the army's thinking about the future has been taken over by a generation of retired general officers, officers whose active service, in some cases, long predates the Gulf War, and who now serve as highly paid consultants whose acquiescence in any new initiative is mandatory. The dependence of the army on contracting out its creative thinking to retired mandarins gives a new twist to Sir William Butler's famous observation about nations who insist on making a distinction between those who think and those who fight. The institutional cost is that the army is doing much less these days to grow or encourage thinkers in uniform (like both the younger Krepinevich and Bacevich) capable and willing to think outside the currently approved box. The absence of substantive debate in professional journals on the order of that between Bacevich and Krepinevich in *The National Interest* (and indeed the progressive withering away of the institutional professional journals themselves) is indicative.

Tom Donnelly's final remarks addressing the stark choice implied by Bacevich and Krepinevich lay down the implicit question: "Whither the armed forces?" Donnelly employs the oft-used analogy of the British Army in the interwar years to illustrate the dimensions of the dilemma. He overlooks one key point in his analogy, however, and that is that the "Ten Year Rule" that reduced the British armed forces so drastically in the 1920s was a valid policy choice when it was adopted in 1919. The British failure was not disarmament in the Twenties. It was the failure to respond to the renewed threat of continental war in the Thirties. To infer, as many will, that the ultimate unpreparedness of 1939 somehow justifies heavy investment in acquisition of new defense technologies today, absent a first-class enemy, rather misses the point.

The real lesson in the British experience of the Twenties and Thirties is that one must read the world correctly and match one's defense efforts and foreign policy choices rationally—recognizing that the latter is often limited and imposed by external factors often independent of one's control. Events this past year in Korea and Iraq demonstrate that serious threats requiring some level of high technology military response remain. In that, the U.S. situation is unlike that of the British in

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the 1920s. At the same time, the propensity of the American government to run here and there, acting as the world's policeman, indicates that simply willing away deliberate preparation for the sort of problem Bacevich highlights will not do either. And, as the Rangers' fight in Mogadishu showed, sans-culottes with cheap rockets can still make a hash of high technology helicopters and U.S. foreign policy. Much as the military may wish it, they will not have the liberty of selecting either an *Armée de Métier*, or forces organized for Operations Other than War. Their world is not going to be that simple and somehow the armed forces must prepare to deal with both categories of the problem.

Richard M. Swain
School of Advanced Military Studies, Leavenworth, KS

A Bad Rehearsal:

COMMANDER Wilkinson's vivid account of Operation Tiger in your Fall issue is the first personal reminiscence I have read of the disastrous landing exercise at Slapton Sands, planned as a rehearsal in April 1944, for the Normandy invasion some six weeks later. It brought back the chill we felt at Omar Bradley's headquarters at the time, not only for the casualties, but for the possibility that some of the missing might have been picked up by a German E-boat and, under interrogation, revealed the Normandy plans.

I was sorry to see that Commander Wilkinson perpetuated—innocently, I am sure—the canard that the 749 dead, mostly Americans, were "buried in haste and secrecy in a field behind the lagoon and beach." Unfortunately, that myth was given recent currency by Paul Fussel's 1989 book *Wartime*, which provided the macabre detail that the "749 bodies were secretly bulldozed into a common grave on the Devon farm of Mr. Nolan Tope." The late historian, Charles B. MacDonald, had laid to rest that misconception with his article, "Slapton Sands: The 'Cover-up' That Never Was," in the June 1988 issue of *Army Magazine*.

MacDonald had traced the story to a rumor started by a local resident "that as a young woman she had witnessed the burial of 'hundreds' of Americans in a mass grave" (she subsequently changed the story to individual graves) and that the bodies were still there. The owner of the farm stated in a 1987 interview on BBC television that he had owned and lived on that land all his life, and no one was ever buried there. MacDonald concluded that the farmer's account "tallies with U.S. Army records that show...that soon after the tragedy hundreds of the dead were interred temporarily in a World War I U.S. cemetery in England." After the war they were either moved to another American cemetery in Europe or shipped to the United States, at the option of next of kin.

Robert A. Riesman
Providence, RI

Pamela's Progress:

I enjoyed David Levy's review of Christopher Ogden's biography of Pamela Digby Churchill Hayward Harriman. Shortly after reading it, I came across a passage in the recently published *Love From Nancy: The Letters of Nancy Mitford* (edited by Charlotte Mosley) which might interest your readers. It is from a letter written in October, 1939 to Violet Hammersley:

> Again we are indebted to that entirely admirable character Lord Stanley of Alderley for

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the following narrative. It seems that his lordship was taking a cordial with Lady Diana Cooper when in came Randolph with Miss Digby whom he had met that day for the first time. Edward knew Miss D already, a pretty, luscious little piece, and so he asked her out to dinner but she said she was already going out with Randolph. Next morning at eight Edward was rung up by Miss D who sounded rather distracted and said he must go round to see her at once. Curiosity of course prised him out of his bed and round he went, and found Miss D in quite a stew saying she had promised to marry Randolph. What! You only met him yesterday. Yes, and he says he is not in love with me but I look healthy and he wishes to perpetuate the name of Churchill before he is killed. Edward then spent two hours giving the girl fatherly advice, punctuated no doubt by chaste kisses, but all, as you know, in vain. It seems that she was the eighth girl Randolph had proposed to since the war began, his best effort being three in one evening.

Miss Mitford returned briefly to the subject of Pamela and Randolph many years later in a letter to Sir Hugh Jackson (February, 1965):

> She was a red-headed bouncing little thing, regarded as a joke by her contemporaries; had never had the slightest success and flew to the altar with him. To do her justice she couldn't have put up with the treatment he metes out to his wives—even his friends, who didn't much like her, admitted that...

Joke or not, the "bouncing little thing" seems to be having the last laugh as Ambassador Harriman.

John Stockton
London

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A State of Mind

Owen Harries

AT A RECENT *National Review* seminar, appropriately held in the well-conserved town of St. Michaels on the eastern shore of the Chesapeake Bay, I had the pleasure of listening to Bill Kristol analyzing the current state of American politics. It was masterfully done—thoroughly informed, judicious, full of interesting connections and distinctions, even witty. But one thing was striking: in a thirty-minute talk, he found it necessary to make only one passing reference to foreign policy.

True, what he had been asked to speak about was domestic politics. But it is also true that anyone given the same task between 1949 and 1989 would have found it impossible to proceed without repeated references to foreign policy and the way it impacted on the domestic scene. In the 1950s, McCarthyism, the implications of Sputnik for American education, and the "missile gap" (phoney, as it turned out, but crucially important in the presidential elections of 1960) would have been essential topics. Throughout most of the 1960s there was, of course, Vietnam. After that came OPEC and the oil crisis, ping pong diplomacy, detente and the hostages in Iran, all of which intruded seriously into internal politics. And in Reagan's 1980s the greatly increased defense budget, "Star Wars," the rise of Japan and the decline of America that it allegedly foreshadowed, and "Irangate" would all have had to be woven into the sort of review that Bill Kristol gave.

Such references to foreign and security policies would have been inescapable during those Cold War years for the same reason that they would have been inescapable in a discussion of Napoleon's France, or Great Britain in the late Victorian era: because the country involved was a superpower, and because the external policies of a superpower are so extensive and compelling, so essential to its entire sense of itself, that they have a pervasive influence on its internal political life.

But that is not true of present day, post-Cold War America. As Kristol demonstrated, it is now possible to discuss the domestic political scene very adequately with no, or only the most cursory, reference to foreign policy. And that, it seems to me, is clear evidence that it no longer makes much sense to think of the United States as a superpower—that, indeed, it is seriously misleading and potentially dangerous to do so.

In a recent article (*The New Republic*, October 10), I argued that the term "the sole remaining superpower" that is constantly applied to the United States since the collapse of the Soviet Union is a contradiction in terms. I shall exert an editor's privilege and quote myself:

> The superpower game is a relational one, not solitaire, and it takes at least two to play it. If

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you have two superpowers and you take away one, what is left is something less than a superpower. For being a superpower involves more than having certain capacities in the abstract, certain potentials (if it did not, after all, the United States would have been a superpower as long ago as the 1920s). It involves being fully energized, motivated and focused to mobilize and deploy those capacities and potentials—and it's very unlikely that a state can achieve that condition without the galvanizing presence of at least one rival superpower, to provide the needed sense of urgency and danger. The United States has ceased to be a superpower, not because it has 'declined' but because its circumstances and its interests no longer require or permit it to be one.

The point is that superpowerdom is more about a state of mind than it is about objective criteria and indices of power. America in the interwar years demonstrated, and Japan today demonstrates (and may it long continue to do so!) that it is possible to possess the objective requirements for superpower status without being one. Conversely, Great Britain briefly demonstrated in the years between the end of World War II and the Suez Crisis, and the Soviet Union demonstrated in the 1980s, that, given the will and habit of mind, it is possible to behave like a superpower for awhile even when the objective requirements are not present. But maintaining that will almost always depends on the existence of a serious rival, and that is what the United States lacks today.

At the same *National Review* seminar, Charles Krauthammer disagreed with my argument that it takes at least two to play the superpower game by posing the telling question: If the Soviet Union had won the Cold War instead of the United States, would *it* not have continued to behave like a superpower and impose its will on the world? The answer to that question, of course, is, yes, it almost certainly would have. What that means, however, is not that my original argument was wrong but that it needs qualification. It should be applied only to normal states and not to cancerous ones like Napoleon's France or Hitler's Germany or the Soviet Union. In the latter the will to prevail and predominate is self-generating and insatiable, and does not require a rival or a threat; but in other states, including the United States, it does.

Is it worth arguing in this way about a phrase? Does it matter one way or another? Surely it does, because phrases reflect states of mind, and states of mind go a long way towards determining policies and actions. The phrase "The sole remaining superpower" is one that encourages a state of mind which sees other countries of the world as so many children who can not be left to cope with any problem on their own, without the intervention of the United States—the only properly adult actor in the affairs of the world. To identify a problem therefore becomes equivalent to advocating intervention: all problems are America's problems. It is a foolish state of mind in that it underestimates the ability of others while exaggerating both the competence and the enthusiasm of one's own country. It is also a dangerous state of mind in that it threatens an overextension of one's own powers, while at the same time discouraging the assumption of responsibility for their own affairs by others. □

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